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REV. E. D. VERY,

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

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THE OLD TURNPIKE.

We hear no more of the clanking hoof,
And the stage coach rattling by;
For the steam-king rules the travelled world,
And the old Pike's left to die.
The grass creeps o'er the flinty path,
And the stealthy daisies steal
Where once the stage-horse, day by day,
Lifted his iron heel.

No more the weary stager dreads;
The toil of the coming morn;
No more the bustling landlord runs
At the sound of the echoing horn;
For the dust lies still upon the road,
And bright eyed children play
Where once the clattering hoof and wheel
Rattled along the way.

No more we hear the cracking whip,
Or the strong wheels rumbling sound;
And ah! the water drives us on,
And an iron horse is found!
The coach stands rusting in the yard,
And the horse has sought the plough;
We have spanned the world with an iron rail,
And the steam-king rules us now!

The old turnpike is a pike no more,
Wide open stands the gate;
We have made us a road for our horse to stride,
Which we ride at a flying rate.
We have filled the valleys and levelled the hills,
And tunnelled the mountain side;
And round the rough crag's dizzy verge,
Fearlessly now we ride!

On—on—on—with a haughty front!
A puff, a shriek, and a bound;
While the tardy echoes wake too late,
To babble back the sound;
And the old pike road is left alone,
And the stagers seek the plough:
We have circled the world with an iron rail,
And the steam-king rules us now!

(From the Correspondent of the N. Y. Observer.)
SWEDEN IN A RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW.

MONTAUBAN, (Tarn and Garonne,) }
February 2, 1852. }

Intolerant laws of Sweden.—Some account of them.—How they are executed.—Ecclesiastical Conferences.—Efforts in favour of religious liberty.

I recur often, in my correspondence, to the religious state of Sweden, because the old system of intolerance exists still in this country. If it was a Roman Catholic country we should not be surprised,—for the spirit of persecution,—and of brutal persecution,—is essential to popery. But among a protestant people among pastors and laymen who have embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, who read the Scriptures, and profess to believe the fundamental truths of the gospel! among such a people that there should be religious intolerance: an intolerance which does not fear to resort to judicial prosecutions, and which employs the arm of government to oppress men whose only fault is to have left the established communion: this is a sad anachronism. The disciples of the Reformation must not hide, under the veil of a mistaken charity, such serious faults; on the contrary, they must expose them to the light, condemn them severely, reiterate their complaints, in order that the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of Sweden, admonished by the public sentiment of the world, may feel at length their duty to abolish laws which do not suit our time nor our notions.

In a historic point of view, it is not difficult to explain how religious liberty has not found

place in Swedish institutions. First in the sixteenth century, the Reformers themselves, suffering under the bad influence of their popish education, did not well understand the rights of individuals, relative to matters of faith and worship; Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anglicanism, have been more or less intolerant from their origin. Next protestantism was introduced into Sweden by a decree of government, rather than by the free choice of christians; it was a half-popery suddenly taking the place of old traditions; and many false principles, many bad customs were retained. Add to this that the Lutheran clergy of Sweden have preserved their episcopal organization, and own large property, which induces the children of aristocratic families to enter the ecclesiastical career. These various facts may teach us why Swedish protestantism bears still, in many respects the shameful stamp of Romanism. But this mixture of opposite elements should not be continued; and the duty of all true protestants is, to labor to introduce into Sweden a better state of things.

The following is a brief analysis of laws in Sweden upon religious liberty.

1. The Augsburg Confession, with the episcopal hierarchy, is the established religion.—All Swedes, except the Jews, are obliged to be members of this national church. Dissent, of whatever kind, is regarded as a violation of the law. Parents, must under penalty of fine, have their children baptized, according to the forms of the State-religion. It has happened more than once of late years, that children have been snatched from their mothers arms, by parish constables, or police agents, and brought to a pastor to be baptized. Further, as the act of baptism must be paid for, the furniture or other property of these parents has been sold to satisfy the exactions of the parson and his train.

2. At the age of fifteen or sixteen years, every young man is obliged to attend the catechetical instructions of his parish; then he receives confirmation and the sacrament of the supper. A Swede who should not go through these formalities would be deprived of his civil rights, and treated as a foreigner, or even in some cases be punished by the courts of law. You see that the conversion of the heart has no place in these mere external arrangements. The young catechumen may be a true believer or not, that is not the chief question: he must come to the holy table at the time fixed by the ecclesiastical rules.

3. Further, every inhabitant of Sweden is obliged to commune in the parish church, at least once in twelve months. If he does not he loses his privileges of citizenship. Thus he cannot hold any office, great or small, in the State; he cannot appear as a witness before a court of justice; he cannot found a commercial establishment, nor receive apprentices, &c. When a Swede passes from one parish to another, he must bring with him a certificate from his pastor, attesting that he has partaken of the holy supper during the preceding year; if not, he cannot be admitted into a new place of residence, nor claim the protection of the law.

4. Marriage itself is subjected to this formality. If the two parties cannot prove that they have communed in the last twelve months, the pastor refuses to give them the nuptial consecration, and all is stopt; for the civil act and the religious act are blended in Swedish marriages. Lately, two pious persons presented themselves to the pastor to be married.—But they had no legal certificate of communion, because they belonged to a Baptist congregation. In consequence, the pastor refused their request. The matter was brought before the High Consistory, over which pre-

sided the bishop of the province. This court decided that these persons, though well known for their good morals, could not be married by the pastor, while they forsook the national church.

5. The ecclesiastical law forbids meetings for reading the Word of God, for prayer, or any other religious exercises. Pastors alone of the ecclesiastical establishments have the right to perform religious services; and even they cannot do it but in the churches, and on days and at hours fixed by rules. The head of the family is instructed to teach his children the fear of God, but he must not go out of the domestic circle. If an individual is caught conducting a religious meeting, he is punished with a fine, as well as the proprietor of the house which is opened for this object. For the second offence the fine is doubled, or instead of a fine, there is imprisonment for twenty-eight days. For the third offence, the two delinquents,—the evangelist and the proprietor of the house, are banished from the kingdom.

Every man born in Sweden,—Jews excepted,—is obliged to enter and remain in the Lutheran church. Let his convictions change or not, let him be a believer or unbeliever, no matter! the place of his birth determining his religious professions. He is a member of the national Establishment, and he cannot cease to be. The pastors are charged to watch, each in his own parish, over the observance of these rules, and they have received with this purpose, powers resembling more the attributes of policemen, than those of ministers of Christ.

Such are the laws. But it is just to say that several Lutheran bishops, either because they know better the precepts of the Gospel, or because they are ashamed to provoke persecutions which are more and more condemned by public opinion. No doubt there are churchmen who try to prevent by force private religious meetings and tolerate more readily meetings where drunkenness and debauchery prevail. But these examples of intolerance are less frequent now than formerly.—Better and more Christian sentiments begin to pervade the body of this Lutheran clergy. In some provinces of Sweden, the religious movement has extended greatly, without serious opposition from the pastors.

As a striking proof of this happy change, I will mention the ecclesiastical Conferences which have been held during the past year at Gefle, in the north of Sweden, and at Helsingborg in the south. These are not official, but voluntary meetings, where the pastors of a given district join with laymen to discuss the religious questions of the day. It is satisfactory to see that the majority of persons present at these Conferences express opinions in favour of religious liberty.

Podobaptism destroys the Visible Church.

A Mr. Ruskin, who is connected with the Establishment, has, in a pamphlet lately published, instituted the inquiry as to what is meant by a Church. He discards the idea of making it consist of the clergy, and thinks the definition of an Oxford divine, that it is "an external institution of certain forms and ceremonies," wholly unsatisfactory. Our Saviour did not mean that we should tell our difficulty to the clergy, when he says "tell it to the church," but to an organization, of which the clergy are merely officers and servants. Denying that baptism is a sign of admission to the church, Mr. R. says "half the baptized people in the world" are very visible rogues, believing neither in God nor devil." "We spend much time in arguing about efficiency of sacraments and such other mysteries; but we do not act upon the very certain tests,

which are clear and visible. We know that Christ's people are not thieves—not liars—not busybodies—not dishonest—not avaricious—not wasteful—not cruel. Let us, then, get ourselves well clear of thieves, liars, wasteful people, avaricious people, cheating people, people who do not pay their debts. Let us assure them that they at least do not belong to the visible church; and having thus got that church into decent shape and cohesion, it will be time to think of drawing the stake-nets closer."

It is gratifying to see a Pedobaptist candid enough to admit that baptism administered to an unconverted person, has no effect to improve his moral character, or to render him fit for a place in the visible church. That body is not, and cannot be composed of these baptized aliens to faith and virtue. It is made up of a holy generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people. To call such a medley of abominations as baptism administered to a whole nation, in their infancy, brings into an organization a Christian church, shocks all common sense; and nothing but interest and the prejudice of education deters millions from the conclusion that baptism, so administered, is no sign of admission to the church.

There is no such thing as a visible church but on the principle of making it consist of a congregation of baptized believers, meeting in a particular place, to worship God according to the laws of Christ. Mr. R.'s plan is to reach this result substantially, by bringing into "one" "sheepfold" all who are converted after baptism, whether in the Establishment or among Dissenters. But this is an impossibility so long as we admit of the validity of their baptism. They may belong to the church spiritual; but to belong to the church visible, they must be baptized on the profession of faith. This is the conclusion to which the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel arrived, and to which other Pedobaptists must come, before they can be relieved of their perplexity in determining what constitutes a visible church.

ATRIE REGENERATED.—"I mentioned," says Mr. Seymour, in his "Morning with the Jesuits," "the narrative of a friend of my own, who was witness to the conversion of a whole tribe of American Indians. He told me that the tribe were marching down to a river, and that the Roman Catholic priest, without a word of instruction, sprinkled water on every one in the usual form; and then hung a little cross by a string around the neck of each, and telling them that they were now Christians, he left them. My friend told me that they made no profession of faith, and departed precisely as they came,—as naked as savages, as wild, and as ignorant as heathen"—The Jesuit, instead of being ashamed of the account, to Mr. Seymour's astonishment, defended these conversions as real; and in confirmation of that view of the subject, mentioned that the missionary had returned to the same Indians after two years' absence, and had been delighted to find, on summoning them to confession, "that they had no sins to confess."

On the Tractarian or Romish theory of baptismal regeneration, this is a fair and legitimate application of the ordinance. If baptism is regeneration, it would be well to sprinkle all the heathen in the same way, and we do not understand the principle on which the Tractarians refrain from physical force in making converts. "If I believed in the doctrine of baptismal regeneration," the late venerable Dr. Miller said, "I would go into the streets and hale men by the hair of the head, and compel them to be baptized." The Jesuit was consistent in his theory, and only acted up to his profession.—*Ex Paper.*