

RECOLLECTIONS OF DR. DÖLLINGER.

IV. CONTINENTAL TOPICS.

AN insatiable thirst for knowledge, or rather, a fearless desire to know the whole truth about things worth knowing, may be called the dominant passion of Dr. Döllinger's life. I say "fearless," because the fact that the results of investigation were likely to be of an unwelcome character, never made him turn back from investigating. It was this which always made him glad to converse on subjects respecting which his companion for the moment could possibly give him some information. Hence his love of talking on English topics with Englishmen, on Italian topics with Italians, and on their own special subjects with specialists. But he was a born teacher as well as a born student; and among the chief delights of his long life the pleasure of imparting information came next to the pleasure of acquiring it. His vast acquaintance with foreign politics, especially in matters ecclesiastical, and *as illuminated by the history of the past*, made his conversation on all continental topics intensely interesting to Englishmen, to whose insular prejudices and ignorance knowledge and opinions such as his were a most wholesome and delightful corrective. But it seems a hopeless task to attempt to convey to those who have never heard him a fair idea of either the instructiveness or the charm of such conversations: all the more so as he had a keen appreciation of what is droll or grotesque either in the past or the present, and would manifest this by a vivacity of manner and of look which was as irresistible as it is inimitable.

I had been saying one day in 1872, that it was difficult for English Liberals to approve the recent legislation against the Jesuits. It was allowed that they were pernicious; but the law looked like persecution. He replied: "Oh,

there will not be much persecution. The main object is to restrain their influence in the schools. But I confess myself that I should have preferred to have had an oath administered to them; and I should like to have had the commission of drawing up that oath. I think I could frame one which they would refuse to take, and yet which public opinion would approve as natural and fair."

"An oath of allegiance to the empire?"

"Yes, and of renunciation of certain doctrines; for example, that when a civil law runs counter to an ecclesiastical law, it is right to disobey the civil law. The law against the Jesuits affects only Prussia and Bavaria: there are no Jesuits in any of the smaller States. In Prussia they are very numerous: in Bavaria there is one small community at Ratisbon. They came there in rather a strange way, occupying the Scotch monastery. The Scotch for a long time had a monastery at Ratisbon; but it did not flourish. The young Scotchmen who came out to it could never become acclimatized. They fell sick and had to go home again; or, if they remained, died prematurely. It was obvious that the supply could not be kept up. The Scotch bishops wished to have the revenues of the monastery transferred to Scotland; but of course that could not be. After some discussion it was agreed that a certain sum<sup>1</sup> was to be paid to the Scotch Church, and the monastery given up to another religious society. *Rome stipulated that these should be Jesuits.*

"We have here an instance of what great changes may be caused simply by a name. The *Scotæ*, as you know, in the eighth and ninth centuries mean the Irish. Much of Germany, for example my own native place (Bamberg), was converted by Irish missionaries, St. Kilian and others

<sup>1</sup> 120,000 florins. In spite of the protest of the Archbishop of Glasgow, the money was paid, not to the Scotch Church, but to the Propaganda!

(Colman and Totman, c. A.D. 680). In gratitude for this benefit *monasteria Scotarum* were founded in various places, —Würzburg, Erdfurth, Cologne, and Ratisbon. Somehow or other, one does not know how, the name *Scotæ* came to be confined to the people in North Britain, while the Irish were called *Hiberni*; and about the twelfth century these monasteries appear as belonging to Scotchmen. How the transfer from Irish to Scotch came about is lost in obscurity. I myself learnt the first rudiments of English from an old Scotch Benedictine—one of the last of them—at Würzburg.”

The same year he was telling me the history of the great split in the Society of the Jesuits, when their General Gonzalez, although supported by Innocent XI., tried in vain to put an end to probabilism as the received doctrine of the society; all of which is now given in great detail in the invaluable work on *Moralstreitigkeiten in der Römischkatholischen Kirche* published by Döllinger and Reusch last year. He continued; “Innocent XI. is the only Pope in the last three centuries that there has been any thought of canonizing. Pius V. (1566) is the last that was canonized. The ‘Acts’ for the canonization of Innocent XI. were drawn up and are still in existence in print. Gonzalez’ narration of his intercourse with Innocent is among the evidence. But the Jesuits have done their utmost to prevent a man, who was so opposed to their society, from being declared a saint. And they have succeeded. The suppression of the Jesuits by Clement XIV. in 1773 was no voluntary act on his part. He was driven on to it by the Spanish ambassador and others, who threatened him with the exposure of certain awkward facts if he refused to comply. Up to 1773 Munich was quite a paradise for the Jesuits: they were the lords of the situation. But when Pius VII. in an evil hour (1814) allowed the re-institution of the society, they were not allowed to return to Munich.

Under the late king Maximilian they made one astounding effort to get back. The king was often unwell and suffered dreadfully from headache. Some Jesuits asked for an audience. They said that they were in possession of a secret remedy that would cure the king, and that they would tell him of it, if he would allow the society to re-establish itself in Munich. King Max would not even see them."

"There was a time when I admired the Jesuits," said Dr. Döllinger, on another occasion; "but that was before I knew so much about them as I do now."

"The corruption of the order must have begun very soon."

"Yes; there is a little book written by a well-known Spanish Jesuit, Mariana,—perhaps the ablest man the Jesuits ever had,—in which he speaks of the diseases already existing in the society.<sup>1</sup> It was written in Spanish, and afterwards translated into Latin. It has since been published in Spanish again. The Jesuits declare that it is not Mariana's, and have had it put on the Index. But there is no doubt of its authenticity:—indeed, they sometimes admit it among themselves. I have myself seen a correspondence between a general of the order and a member of it, in which the genuineness is admitted, but is nevertheless to be denied; and the book is to be kept from members of the order. To no country have the Jesuits done more harm than to Poland. It has not yet been sufficiently recognised how largely the ruin of Poland was due to them. They had the bringing up of the Polish nobility, and they instituted a system of oppression and persecution of all other religious communities, especially of the independent Greek Church. A country thus divided

<sup>1</sup> *De las Enfermedades de la Compañía de Jesus.* It got into the hands of a French bookseller, who printed it in French and Italian, as well as in Spanish and Latin. Bordeaux, 1625.

against itself could not stand. To Spain also they have done infinite harm.<sup>1</sup> Hence the anxiety of the Spanish ambassador for the suppression of the order. And I don't think that English Roman Catholics know how much better their position would have been in the old days of oppression, if it had not been for the Jesuits. I want to bring that out in my lectures on reunion.

“Alexander III. (1159–1181) was the first to claim the canonization of saints as a special privilege of the Pope. Pius IX., under the direction of the Jesuits, has made a very free use of this privilege. Of course every Jesuit who is canonized is a proof of the excellence of the order and a gratification of Jesuit pride. The last historian of the order (Cordara),—the one who brought down their own history of themselves to about 1625, since when it has not been continued,—lived to see the suppression of the order in 1773. He has left us his opinion as to *why* they were put down, why the Almighty allowed so useful a society to be extinguished; and he comes to the conclusion that it is on account of their pride. ‘We have been inordinately proud,’ he confesses; ‘we have set ourselves above everything, every office and every institution. We have assumed our own superiority, and have treated all other orders and societies with contempt. Pride has been the cause of our fall.’”

The day after this conversation Prince Hohenlohe was in Munich, having just come from Berlin. He called on Dr. Döllinger, and told him that one great reason why the Government was taking such strong measures against the Jesuits was apprehension of the influence which they exercise upon the troops, making the Roman Catholic soldiers

<sup>1</sup> During the political crisis in Spain in 1873, I asked Dr. Döllinger what he considered to be the cause of the decadence of that country. He replied, “First, *idleness*, taught by the example of the numerous monks throughout the land; secondly, *cruelty*, taught by the Inquisition; thirdly, *ignorance*, produced by the Index.” This he explained at considerable length.

disaffected and unwilling to fight for a Protestant empire. In Italy the clergy had tried to sow disaffection in the army without success; but in Germany, where religion has a far more real hold upon the people, such attempts were serious. Dr. Döllinger seemed to have no doubt that Bismarck was the originator of the law against the Jesuits, and spoke as if he knew this. He told me of a ministerial council held before the debate in the Reichstag, in which Bismarck delivered the famous utterance, "We are not going to Canossa, either in the body or in the spirit" (*Wir gehen nicht nach Canossa, weder körperlich noch geistlich*). At this council of ministers discussion had gone on for some time and Bismarck had remained silent. At last he said, "It is my opinion that the Jesuits should be excommunicated from the German empire. They must be put under the ban of the empire. *Hinaus mit ihnen!*"

A year or two later (July, 1875) Dr. Döllinger said: "Here in Germany the fight between the Government and the ultramontanes is as fierce as ever: no prospect of peace or arrangement. It is not commonly understood in England what a tremendous power the Government here have to contend with; how Vaticanism hangs round the neck of a continental Government like a millstone. If the clergy are against the laws, and use their influence to prevent their being carried into effect, what is left for a Government to do but to put every engine in its possession to work to control the clergy? It is ignorance of the enormous difficulties of the German Government which causes the *Times* and some of our friends to write as they do about the Falk laws. They cannot appreciate the circumstances which make those laws just."

I asked what steps the Bavarian Government would take respecting the pastorals which the bishops had just issued with a view to influencing the elections.

"None," he said; "there are none to be taken."

“But surely the bishops have contravened the law by publishing such documents without the royal assent.”

“No doubt; but the law is without a sanction. If the Government were to prosecute the bishops, it would gain nothing. It is just the same as the publication of the Vatican decrees. The minister then declared publicly that it was impossible to punish the bishops for the offence which they had committed: such was the state of the law. In Prussia it would be different. There the State could, and no doubt would, proceed against the bishops with effect. Here in Munich, in the elections which are now going on, the clergy are using the confessional itself as an engine for influencing the result.”

He remarked that the Italian Government had repeated the fatal mistake made by Sir Robert Peel, in allowing the Roman Catholic hierarchy to be appointed directly by the Roman see, without retaining even a veto for the Government. The consequences may be worse in Italy than in England, “but in one respect the English Government was more culpable. An Italian minister, when reproached with this error, replied that the ministry could not help themselves. Those Italians who are not ultramontanes are for the most part indifferentists, who care nothing whatever about religion, or else are infidels, and think that the surest way of bringing religion to ruin is to allow the Papacy full swing.<sup>1</sup> ‘Consequently,’ said this minister, ‘if we fought the Papacy, we should have no support from any large section of society; and without that it would be hopeless to fight. So we had no course left but to throw everything over to the Curia.’ Now, if the English Government had determined on taking a firm line in the matter, they would have been backed up very strongly indeed by public opinion.”

<sup>1</sup> As a French politician of the Left said, when asked to back up a protest against the proceedings of the Vatican Council, “*Rome fait trop bien nos affaires pour qu’il soit de notre intérêt de lui créer des embarras.*”

Another point in which he severely criticised English policy, was our treatment of the Eastern question. In 1879 he was speaking at Tegernsee of the uselessness of attempting to renew the Reunion Conferences at Bonn. The cross divisions in the Eastern Churches, both ecclesiastically and politically, were so great as to render any such attempt hopeless. "A further difficulty arises," said he, "from the attitude which the English Government, ever since the Crimean war, has adopted in the East, as the upholder of the Turk in all things. England is now regarded in the East as the natural enemy of the Christian. That will prove a stumbling-block when Oriental Christians are asked to enter into communion with the English Church. That it is any use giving Turkey a chance of reformation and regeneration, I do not at all believe. But it would have been quite possible to give Turkey this chance without leaving Christian populations utterly at the mercy of the Turk. In 1856 not only were the Christians not protected, but what protection they had enjoyed up to that time was done away. The Turk knew that from henceforth he could do as he pleased. This has always been the weak place in Gladstone's armour: and, so far as I know, he has never made the only defence that was valid; that in 1856 he was only a subordinate member of the Government, and had to follow his superiors."

"No; what I think he says is, that twenty years ago it seemed to be worth while to give Turkey another chance of reform. Turkey has had the chance and has grown worse instead of better."

"That does not excuse the sacrifice of the Christians."

On more than one occasion I have chanced to dine with Dr. Döllinger on July 18th, the anniversary of the definition of the Infallibility; *dies Alliensis*, as by a strange coincidence it happens to be. In 1880 he told me that the ex-president of a Roman Catholic seminary, who had resigned

after the proclamation of the dogma, had recently asked him whether there was any hope that the new Pope would do anything for those who were conscientiously unable to accept the dogma, but otherwise wished to remain members of the Church, so that they might be able to obtain work. "I told him," said Dr. Döllinger, "that I was certain that there was not the smallest hope of anything of the kind. The present Pope would have conjured people not to pass the dogma; but now that it has been decreed he must hold to it."<sup>1</sup>

"Don't you think," I asked, "that his making Newman a cardinal was intended to announce that Newman's minimizing of the dogma was henceforth to be an allowable interpretation."

He shook his head. "They do not know in Rome what Newman's theory of the dogma is: it is a cardinal rule there not to understand any English.<sup>2</sup> And they do not care what his theory is. Rome does not ask for *faith*; she asks for *obedience*. The question is, not, *Does he believe?* but, *Has he submitted?* Only submit, and you will not be asked about any explanations or reservations. The present Pope has tied his own hands and feet. He saw how much evil resulted from Pius IX. doing everything in an autocratic way, taking advice from a very small clique, and he promised the cardinals at the beginning of his pontificate that he would do nothing of importance without the consent of the

<sup>1</sup> A year or two later he said: "The present Pope prides himself on having made things more sure by being less pronounced. He fancies that his moderation is causing the Roman Church to be more firmly established. It remains to be seen whether he is right in thinking this."

<sup>2</sup> In April, 1879, he had written to me: "In Rome 'they have caught a Tartar' in making Newman a cardinal. If only the good people there knew how fundamentally anti-Romish—in spite of all protestations of submission (*Unterwerfungs-demonstrationen*)—Newman's theological modes of thought are! With all their curialistic cunning (*Effigkeit*) there is *sancta simplicitas*." On another occasion he said that if Newman's writings had been known and understood in Rome, they would have put him on the Index instead of making him cardinal.

College. So there is no chance of a change for the better. Moreover every one who comes from Rome tells me that the general belief there is, that Franchi, the Pope's late secretary, was poisoned. The corpse was quite black; and as Franchi was a great deal too liberal in his opinions for the majority of the Curia, they would be glad to get him out of the way. This makes others who are of similar views very shy of displaying them. Among other points in which Leo XIII. has been obliged to give way, is that of keeping up the fiction of the Pope being a prisoner. He wishes to go into the country for a change of air, but the cardinals will not allow it. He must be an actor and keep to the part of 'the prisoner of the Vatican.' This tells on his health. Moreover he overworks himself, sitting up till one or two in the morning. His brother remonstrated with him about it, and the Pope replied, 'I must work for the Church'; to which his brother rejoined, 'The best thing that you can do for the Church is to take care of yourself and live as long as you can; for, when you die, things will be far worse.' If I were offered the Popedom, tiara, Vatican, and all, on the condition of never leaving the Vatican, I should say 'No, thank you; you may keep them for yourself.' I think that on one condition I would accept; that I might be allowed to make a clean sweep of all the cardinals and all the 600 members of the Curia, and start with a new set, who would not be the creatures of Pius IX."

During a walk in 1876 I asked him whether he thought that there would ever come a great crash as regards Vaticanism, or whether people would gradually and insensibly fall away from it.

"As regards that, I suppose one must distinguish between different nations and countries. Among the Romance nations there is no interest in the subject: in Italy, Spain, and Portugal they are *poco curanti*, quite indifferent. In France ultramontanism has this immense advantage, that

it is the only form of religion that exists : the rest of the nation is infidel or indifferent. And of this the clergy make good capital : they represent all attacks upon them as attacks upon Christianity. The bishops are continually doing this. With them it is never 'Rome,' or 'the Vatican,' or 'the Pope,' but 'the religion of Jesus Christ.' In Germany ultramontanism has a somewhat similar advantage on account of the Falk laws. It is always maintained by the clergy, and the masses to a large extent believe them, that Catholics are persecuted for their religion by a Protestant and infidel Government. And this will continue for some time longer ; but it cannot go on for ever. People will begin to see more and more that it is not Catholics as such that are interfered with, but only the ultramontane system, which is subversive of all government, that is severely handled. In time it must be patent to all, that Catholics who will observe the laws are as free in Germany as elsewhere. If the Government remains firm for twenty years it will win : but there is no saying what a new emperor or a new chancellor may do. If a Pope should be elected who is willing to establish a *modus vivendi* with the kingdom of Italy, ultramontanism will receive a great shock, and the moral influence of the Jesuit party in Europe must suffer accordingly. And if a *modus vivendi* is established between the Papacy and the Italian Government, the same is likely to follow in time with regard to the German Government. Even now it would be difficult for Rome to answer the question why what is allowed in Austria is forbidden in Germany. The Pope has declared that the laws of Austria are quite as abominable as those of Germany, and yet he orders the Austrian bishops to submit and the German bishops to rebel."

I asked the object of this policy.

"Because," said Dr. Döllinger, standing still, while a stern look came over his face (such as would come, when he

was saying a thing, of the truth of which he was profoundly convinced), "because it has always been a principle with Rome to have only one enemy at a time. She never sets all the world at defiance at once. One power is flattered while another is attacked. But a time may come when Austria will unite with Germany, and under such pressure Rome may give way."

"Bismarck has been giving himself much trouble to get various Governments to join with him in the attempt to exercise an influence on the election of the next Pope. He has tried to get Russia, Austria, and Italy to combine with Germany. In each case he has had no success whatever. None of the Governments will help him. Even if they would, it would be of no use. Bismarck is not sufficiently informed in these subjects. From his youth he has studied entirely different questions, and he does not know the conditions under which influence could be exercised in these matters. The only Government outside Italy which could exercise some small amount of influence is France. And France has got only four or five cardinals. In the case of Clement XIV. France determined the election. The Bourbons in France, Spain, and Naples combined to instruct the French, Spanish, and Neapolitan cardinals to prevent the election of every one but Ganganelli;<sup>1</sup> and as two-thirds are required to carry an election, these cardinals were quite numerous enough to accomplish their object. Once in the history of the Papacy the election has been in the hands of one man—the Emperor Philip II. He had two-thirds of the cardinals in his pocket. By giving them bishoprics and other lucrative posts, without compelling them to reside, he made it agreeable to them to do as he pleased. The Bourbons could do much to determine an election as long as they held the three thrones: but now no

<sup>1</sup> The conclave lasted three months, February to May, 1769, and there were 185 scrutinies.

Government could do anything by interfering. It is most unlikely that a foreigner should be elected. Manning has no chance: of the foreigners, a French cardinal would be chosen. A foreigner might remove the seat of the Papacy from Italy, and the Italian cardinals would not risk that. Moreover many of them are quite disposed to come to terms with the Italian Government. An Italian looks to the Government for promotion for his relations and friends. At present Italian ecclesiastics are entirely cut off from all the advantages which Government alone can grant.

“It is sometimes thought that Hadrian VI., the last foreign Pope, owed his election to the influence of his former pupil, Charles V. This is quite a mistake. The emperor never thought of his tutor, and used his influence in quite another direction. Hadrian of Utrecht owed his election to the impossibility of any other arrangement. The Italian cardinals could not agree as to any one Italian. Each Italian that was tried failed to obtain two-thirds of the votes, and at last in despair they accepted a foreigner as a compromise. Nothing of the kind is likely to happen now.”

Among the things which at the present time dismayed Dr. Döllinger were the gross superstition and paganism in religion which are tolerated and even encouraged by the authorities in the Roman Church. In 1872 there was a prophecy current in Bavaria, that there would be a great and prolonged darkness some time in August. To provide against this darkness black tapers, specially blessed for the purpose, were being sold at Alt Oettingen, the favourite Bavarian place of pilgrimage; and a priest was going about Munich selling consecrated matches to light the consecrated tapers! After telling me about the prophecy, Dr. Döllinger went on to speak of La Salette, the French place of pilgrimage, where the Virgin is said to have appeared to two children, and to have made to them the incomprehensible announcement, “I am the Immaculate Conception.”

Dr. Döllinger had been told by a cardinal some particulars respecting the success of this supposed miracle. When it was first reported, a vicar-general of the diocese of Grenoble, knowing that the whole thing was an imposture, went to Rome to warn the Pope against believing it. It would cause great scandal if the fiction received sanction. The woman who acted the imposture was a person of extravagant habits, and was known to have bought the brilliant attire, in which she appeared to the children, in Grenoble a short time before. Pius IX. received him well, and seemed quite to agree with him. Others, however, got the ear of the Pope, and brought the pretended miracle into connexion with his pet idea: the Virgin was represented as having told the boy and girl that the Pope was to be declared infallible. The vicar-general, when he next visited the Pope, was much surprised to find that he was received with great bitterness. He was told that a miracle had certainly taken place, and that he was doing very wrongly in trying to throw discredit upon it. Whether the woman acted spontaneously for a freak, or was inspired by persons who wanted such a miracle for their own purposes, was never clearly made out.

Dr. Döllinger severely condemned spasmodic and sensational efforts at religious revivals, with special reference to the gigantic pilgrimages and other theatrical displays which have been such favourite devices in France. In 1873 there was a huge pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial, in which bishops, generals, and deputies of the National Assembly took part, with white banners bearing a red heart and the words, *Arrête, le cœur de Jésus est là!* God was prayed to save France in the name of the Sacred Heart; a petition which Dr. Döllinger said reminded him of what he once saw in a village church, *viz.* a representation of the Trinity, and under this the words, "Holy Trinity, pray for us."

S. Florian in armour, pouring water out of a bucket on

to a blazing house, is a common object in Bavaria. According to the legend, S. Florian was condemned to be burned to death, but the faggot would not kindle, so he was beheaded instead, and became the patron saint of fire-brigades. "Do you know," continued Dr. Döllinger, "why S. Barbara is the patron saint of artillery? Because she was shut up in a tower."

"And a tower is round like a cannon?"

"Yes," said he, laughing; "that is it. When I was a lad at Würzburg, cannon were always fired on S. Barbara's day. And do you know why S. Catharine is the patron saint of philosophy?"

"Because she silenced the philosophers."

"Exactly. I remember that I was once sent by the Government to superintend an examination at Freising. Freising was the first attempt made by the clergy to form a theological college,—started by the Archbishop of Munich and others. The Government wanted to know what was going on there,—what was being taught; and I was sent as commissary. The teacher of philosophy was an old priest, who knew a little scholastic philosophy and had put together a catechism out of the schoolmen, which he dictated to the students, and they learnt the answers by heart. The first question was, *Quid est philosophia?* And the answer was, *Ea scientia cujus patrona est Sancta Catharina.* And I was expected to sit by and look serious during such an examination!"

ALFRED PLUMMER.