

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

ART. III.—ENRICO DI CAMPELLO.

I AM indebted to the pleasant biography of Campello written by the Rev. Dr. Robertson, Chaplain to the Scotch Church in Venice, for the information with which this article begins. Dr. Robertson himself is an accomplished writer on many subjects connected with religion in Italy past and present. He is personally acquainted with Campello; is a good Italian scholar, and in touch with many classes of the people. To Scotch sagacity he joins a genial comprehensiveness which is something more than Scotch, and a genuine sympathy with the wonderful land in which he dwells. He has done substantial service to the cause of the Reformation by publishing this excellent biography of its Leader in Italy; and the book derives additional authority from the fact that Dr. Robertson has personally examined Campello's work, and testifies to it with fraternal warmth, though he is himself a minister of the Kirk, and therefore cannot be suspected of a bias towards Episcopacy or Old Catholicism.

Enrico di Campello was born at Rome in November, 1831. The family seat of the Campellos had long been at Spoleto; but social and political engagements brought them to Rome for the winters. The early years of Enrico were spent in easy affluence, at good schools, and amid surroundings of luxury and dignity which mark patricians even in Modern Rome. When he was seventeen years old the Revolution broke out, the Pope fled, and Enrico's father, who was a Liberal, obtained office under the temporary Government. When Pio Nono returned, he retained Campello as Director of the Post-Office, on the condition that he would give a son to the Church. The father promised, and Enrico was destined to the altar. After a vain resistance to the terms of the covenant between the Pope and his father, Enrico yielded, was hastily prepared by the Jesuits at Tivoli, and, having passed through the minor orders, was consecrated priest in 1855.

Five years later he received from the Pope a canonry at St. Mary the Greater in Rome, a distinction unusual for a man of thirty. Instead of the pittance of bad Latin and bad philosophy, which suffices ordinarily for Italian priests, Campello brought to his work as canon a considerable learning. He was a Doctor of Divinity, he had a degree in Law, and was tinctured with the thoughts of the time through his lay education. He was as much superior in zeal as in ideas to his brother canons at St. Mary's. Already, as a priest, he had begun to work among the poor, the young and the out-cast; he had even opened a Sunday-school and started a mission. These pious activities he continued and enlarged

when he became a Canon. His special taste led him to develop evening schools; but he was assiduous in prayer, in study, in preaching, and in the cure of souls. Evening schools, which Campello thirty years ago was fostering in Rome, have become, says Dr. Robertson, almost universal in Italy since that time. They are admirably conducted, and enthusiastically attended by all classes of the community. Campello's interest in them proves how clear was his insight into the needs of the people, and how prompt was his sympathy in meeting those needs.

But his brother canons viewed Campello and his work with that antipathy peculiar to lazy clericals. They keenly felt and resented the contrast between their own lives wasted in petty intrigue, frivolous pleasure, or fruitless formalism, and the life of Campello spent in doing good. In mockery of his plain dress and sad demeanour, they nicknamed him the Black Canon. They assailed his reputation and his work with calumnies. What these calumnies were precisely Dr. Robertson does not tell us. But we can easily imagine for ourselves in what light the ministrations of a devoted clergyman, eloquent and popular, and the son of a Liberal layman, might be represented by a chapter of reactionary priests. They at length succeeded in closing the school in the Via Tor de Specchj, on the Capitol, in which Campello took so deep an interest. This was a cruel wound, of which he complained in justly bitter indignation.

The Pope heard about it, and, to mark his sense of displeasure with the canons of St. Mary's, he translated Campello to a canonry at St. Peter's, the Metropolitan Church of Latin Christendom. This distinction was understood to point towards a Cardinal's hat; and Campello was thus at thirty-seven in view of the highest preferment but one which the Church of Rome can bestow.

The Pope had probably two ends in view in making Campello a Canon of St. Peter's. He wished to administer a sharp rebuke to his calumniators, and at the same time to remove Campello from immediate contact with the parochial life of the city, in the hope that his duties at St. Peter's would leave him no leisure for dabbling with dangerous plans for educating and improving the lower and middle classes.

The Pope was very much mistaken in his man. Yet the fact that Pius IX. conferred so high a dignity on Campello is quite sufficient to silence all his detractors.

The duties of the new canonry were little to his taste. He found the five hours' chanting of Latin offices every day very irksome. The exhibition of superb and fictitious relics to adoring crowds filled him with grief, and the grief was

augmented by the easy scepticism or the fatuous credulity of the higher clergy. Campello had the best possible opportunity for studying the Papacy at its head and source, and that at a time when the Papacy was passing through a crisis of no ordinary kind. Within two or three years of his elevation to St. Peter's, the Vatican Council was assembled, and the civil unity of Italy was consummated by King Victor Emmanuel's entrance into Rome. Both these events were certain to elicit the true essence of the Papal system. Campello learned from the assemblage of Bishops, dignitaries, and delegates in 1870 what Rome's ecclesiastical temper and policy was to be throughout the world; and by the Pope's attitude toward the new-born kingdom of Italy he could ascertain how Pope and King were likely to live together in the same city.

These two events completed the inward alienation of his heart from the Church of his baptism and of his ordination vows. That Church he found to be hopelessly out of tune with the aspirations of Italy, politically regenerated, and implacably hostile to modern civilization, free inquiry, and human progress.

One last effort did Campello make to reform the Church of Rome from within, an effort described by the Cardinals as a conspiracy, but an effort which, in fact, was nothing else than an attempt to make Rome dissolve herself spontaneously. It was, we think, his duty to make such an effort; other great and good men had done so before—Contarini, and Pole, and Erasmus, and above them all Savonarola. But as they had failed, so must Campello fail; and having failed, it was his duty to forsake the irreformable communion, and to initiate a genuine reformation on Scriptural and primitive principles. This is what he did. This is the head and front of his offending.

In 1878 he addressed to Cardinal Borromeo a dignified and temperate letter, stating the grounds of the convictions which compelled him to resign his canonry, to quit the Papal communion, and to plant the banner of reform in Italy. That letter should be read by all those who wish to do justice to a great and good man, and to understand this very remarkable movement. It is at once an apologia and a programme of the Catholic Reform. A period of keen and complex trial followed the secession. The voluntary exile tasted the bitterness of penury, obscurity, and neglect in the city where his father had been an official of the Government and himself a dignitary of the cathedral. At length the warm and gracious sympathy of Miss Mayor found him out. She busied herself to find him friends, helpers, and support. She intro-

duced him to the Church of England, and at length, after many cruel struggles, the work of reform was established at Arrone, with Count Campello at its head.

It is unnecessary to trace further the personal history of Enrico di Campello. Enough, I trust, has been said to show the integrity of his character and the sincerity of his conduct; enough, also, to show that the movement with which his name is associated is the result neither of precipitation nor of petulance. Indeed, Campello received every token of official favour from the Church of Rome; the Pope was his friend, and gave him no ordinary proofs of friendship. Although the Canons of St. Mary's, and afterwards some of the Cardinals, subjected him to mean and irritating annoyances, they could not inflict upon him external pains or penalties. All this is freely admitted by Campello himself. He did not leave the Church of Rome because he was poor and hoped to become rich as a Protestant. He did not leave her because of disappointed ambition. She did not directly extrude him by force or craft from her bosom; he voluntarily withdrew. No more conclusive demonstration of an unworldly purity of motive could be furnished or demanded. I surmise that two lines of influence at length converged upon the mind of Campello, and issued in the conviction that, if he wished to be loyal to Christ and to Italy, he must forsake the Church of Rome. In the first place, he discovered, by the stupid and selfish opposition of the Chapter of St. Mary's, that Latin clericalism was what it ever has been and ever will be—hostile to the temporal improvement of humanity. It may patronize a great artist, it may toy with a great writer, but it will never open the gates of knowledge and freedom to all sorts and conditions of men. Its true spirit was expressed by Newman when he was made a Cardinal and reminded Catholics that the Church was destined by God to keep the lower orders in their place. Campello, enlightened by the New Testament and guided by that deep love to his fellows which flows from evangelical humiliation and chastening of soul, judged very differently of the Church's office and work in the world. He was determined to be a helper of his brethren, a patriot, and a loyal subject. The Church that would not give free course to these holy aspirations was no Church for him.

Moreover, the theology of Rome, like her practice, was obsolete and corrupt; and in her theology, as in her practice, she hated to be reformed. Campello saw everywhere men hungering for the Bread of Life, in perplexity of reason, in darkness of conscience, dead in trespasses and sins.

To remedy these spiritual disorders, the Pope and the

priesthood commanded the repetition of prayers in a dead language, erected images of apocryphal saints, preached up pilgrimages to medicinal wells, and prescribed the adoration of ancient bones and holy coats. From such a spectacle the reverent and inquiring mind of Campello recoiled in terror and despair. That spectacle has made many a man abandon Christianity altogether. We thank God that a more gracious destiny conducted Enrico di Campello to Arrone and to Catholic Reform.

Every movement for a genuine reform of the Church must be Biblical, spiritual, and free to adapt itself to contemporary needs. These qualities signalized the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and have ever since coloured the development of the Churches of the Reformation. The presence of these qualities in a great religious movement distinguish it from a merely political revolution. As form is the adequate expression in externals of the essential idea of anything, so a Christian reformation is an attempt to restore the Church to its true form—the expression of its Divine idea.

The first necessity with every reformer has been to clearly ascertain this Divine idea of the Church. Accordingly, every reformer, from Tertullian to Campello, has laid special stress on the appeal to the New Testament as the indispensable and normal condition of any reform whatever. For Divine ideas respecting redemption are accessible to man only in the New Testament. It is this appeal which imparts the Biblical quality to Campello's work. As the Bible is its foundation, so is it the natural accompaniment of that work. And the Italian Reformers confidently appeal to the Scriptures of Truth, diligently study and industriously circulate them.

Spirituality is the sacred mark of a true reformation. Christianity is in all things spiritual—in worship (John iv. 23), in corporate and personal life (Phil. ii. 3), in work and instrumentality (1 Cor. xii. 11), in its hope for the future (Gal. v. 5), and even in its doctrine about the final form of the redeemed body (Rom. viii. ; 1 Cor. xv.). How easy it was to forget or obscure the spirituality of Christ's religion, we see in the Epistle to the Galatians. Reformers have always found themselves under the necessity of recalling Christian men to spirituality from carnal and mundane views of Christ in His Church. Campello and his fellow-workers have been no exception to the rule. Closely allied with spirituality is that Christian freedom which in merely human accidents allows the unfettered play of individual local and temporary prepossessions. As soon as Campello escaped from the constrictions of the Papacy, he put in exercise this Christian freedom, by adapting his movement to the needs of Italians of the present day.

He conducted services in the native tongue; he published a liturgy and hymns in that tongue; he instituted classes, guilds, missions, modelled upon the methods created by the Evangelical revival. He let it be known that the body and the mind, as well as the soul, of a human creature are precious in their Maker's sight, and ought not to be neglected by those who minister in that Maker's name.

I will venture to specify three other features in this movement which, important in themselves, offer to English Churchmen points of special attraction. I have already drawn attention to the decisively national character of this movement, and I need not enlarge further upon it. But, in addition to the nationalism of the Italian Reformers, which presents so striking a parallel to the English Reformation in the sixteenth century, the form of government and of worship is studiously like our own. Campello believes in Bishops and in a liturgy. Whatever view we adopt concerning episcopacy in the abstract, there can be very little doubt that in Italy it is the best form of Church government. The Latin genius runs to monarchy. The immemorial practice of the Church in which Italians are bred has been episcopal. The Pope represents the principle of episcopacy with a splendour so imposing that centuries of misgovernment, of worldliness, have scarcely made it dim. Moreover, Campello wisely resolves to make no needless rupture with the past, and in all questions of polity he follows primitive practice. We trust that in the good providence of God Campello may speedily be consecrated the first Bishop of the Italian Reformed Communion.

A liturgy would seem even more necessary for Italians than even the episcopate. A people in whom is bred a taste for stately and classical forms of beauty must surely demand a form of prayer. They might get on without Bishops—at least, for a time—but without a Prayer-Book they could scarcely survive. This is not the place to review the Liturgy of the Eucharist published by the Synod at Arrone. It is a tentative sample of devotional forms which time will multiply and mature. Throughout it the officiating minister is styled a "presbyter;" the word "altar" is never used, except in verses quoted from the Psalms; there are no prayers for the dead, and no doctrine of sacrifice propitiatory for sins. I hope that whoever ponders the account just given of the Italian Reform movement must feel that it is genuine; that it has sprung from influences neither occasional nor transient, but such as perennially govern Christian thought and feeling, especially at epochs of crisis and change; and that at the same time it wears an aspect of sobriety and solidity. Nothing, of course,

will conciliate even the toleration of Rome. The Reformers can expect from her neither justice nor mercy; they know too well the meaning of the famous line :

Parcere devictis, et debellare superbos.

But it is strange and sad that in this country many, contented, almost proud, to ignore the life of Continental Protestantism, should never have heard Campello's name, while others mistrust him as a fanatic, and others, again, suppose him to be only one more of the abortive reformers in whom Italy has, alas! been too prolific. It is right, therefore, to conclude this article by an attempt to measure the ultimate value of Italian Catholic Reform, and to forecast the chances of its survival. During the last thirty years a very extraordinary movement in favour of a pure and primitive Christianity has sprung up with the Latin race. Germany indeed led the way in the old Catholic revolt, but Spain under Cabrera, France under Hyacinthe, Italy under Campello, have followed gallantly. It is true that old Catholicism is not precisely homogeneous; that it touches Waldensianism with the one hand and Dutch Jansenism with the other; that it is quite Protestant in Spain, largely Protestant in Italy, and scarcely Protestant in Germany. Yet if we comprehend that there is vital unity between the separate movements, we see that each has an importance greater than what is merely local. Each helps the other. The fortunes of each as they rise or fall cast a reflection upon the face of the whole.

The Reformers in Spain and Italy turned to England for help. This fact at once invests their cause with especial significance. They look to us for guidance, for sympathy, for spiritual and material support. We cannot say them nay. The claims of pure religion compel us to assent to their appeal. The ultimate victory of their work rests partly in our hands; we may not stand aloof and coldly speculate about their chances, when we may decide those chances in their favour.

I have endeavoured in the preceding pages to describe the features which distinguish the Reformation tendency in Italy as incorporated in the movement guided by Enrico di Campello. The principles of that movement possess all the vitality which is inherent in them, and which we in England have felt for three hundred years, not, indeed, without vicissitude and fluctuation, yet decisively and continuously. Those who are intelligently loyal to the Reformation settlement (to borrow a hackneyed, yet a happy, phrase) can feel no misgiving as to the ultimate triumph of those principles in Italy. The Reformers there are themselves sanguine that public opinion

will at length sustain them. They quote the example of Bonghi, who publicly testified in his open letter to the Pope to the need and the worth of Campello's Reformation. They expressed the hope that parishes will exercise their right of electing their own pastors in favour of candidates who support the Reform. If this hope be realized to any appreciable extent, the movement will gain a legal footing in the land from which it would not easily be dislodged.

If we survey the whole field of religion in Europe, we may discern, I think, that three great religious powers are striving for dominion over the human mind. Sacerdotalism, splendid, organized and vigilant, is competing on the one hand with a living, free and reformed Christianity founded on Scripture and the Primitive Church, and on the other with organic unbelief, inspired either by Voltaire and his successors, or by those materialists who profess to be disciples of Darwin.

It is probable that this great struggle has got to enter upon phases more acute than any which have preceded. There can be no doubt that the sympathies of the Italian Reformers and of all the more evangelical among the Old Catholics are with the opponents of priestcraft and infidelity. Chillingworth has long ago remarked that these two evils are always found together, and, indeed, the work of Campello ought to be regarded as an effort to rescue Italy from irreligion quite as much as a protest against Papal corruptions. In the interests, therefore, of Christianity considered as a whole, Christians should extend to the Reformers in Italy the right hand of fellowship, and this obligation appears to me to rest with unique and imperative stringency upon the members of the Church of England.

H. J. R. MARSTON.



ART. IV.—THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY, AND OTHER CHURCH SOCIETIES FOR THE WELFARE OF YOUNG MEN.

THE Church of England Young Men's Society was founded in 1843, one year before the foundation of the great organization known as the Young Men's Christian Association. It was therefore the first of its kind, and the parent of all.

The idea which the Society embodied was one which, if its originators had been equal to their task, would have made it, perhaps, the most useful Society which ever was founded under the auspices of the Church of England.

The present headquarters of the Society are at the Leopold