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THE CORPUS CHRISTI FESTIVAL AND ITS DOCTRINE.

“*Semper eadem!*” — Ever the same! — that is the proud boast of the Church of Rome. And in one respect we yield her the truth of this boastful assertion. From the time that St. Paul wrote: “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work,” to the spiritual darkness and shadow of death of the fifteenth century; from the time that the Augean filth of popery was swept out of the temple of the Church by the pure Alphaeus of God’s Word, guided by that blessed servant of God, Martin Luther, to this day, when by hypocrisy and deceit Romanism is usurping the very power of the government in our country; from the time that Bishop Boniface III of Rome arrogated to himself the title of Pope to this day, when the doctrine of infallibility has been promulgated, and the dogmatization of the assumption of the Virgin Mary is only a question of time, Rome has been *ever the same* in her hatred of Christ the Savior, the one Redeemer of the world, and His blessed Gospel.

In every other respect, however, we most emphatically repudiate Rome’s claim to the title: *Semper eadem*. Her doctrine of justification by works, her fasting and mechanical praying, her doctrine of purgatory, her canonization of hosts of saints, her mass and her eucharist, her formalism and her festivals, have been developed by a slow process, in the course of many centuries, and Rome, even on mere historical grounds, has not the least shadow of a reason for her proud boast. This will be found true especially of the doctrine of transubstantiation and the establishment of the Corpus Christi festival with its procession.

DR. KEYSER'S "CONSENTING FREEDOM" OF THE HOMO CONVERTENDUS.

(Concluded.)

Dr. Keyser thinks that what divides him from Missouri is the recognition and acknowledgment of "the element of freedom in faith." This is incorrect: Missouri believes—and says—as strenuously as Dr. Keyser that the act of faith is a free act. The question is: How did the believer become free so to act? Dr. Keyser may persuade himself that what he regards as the ethical and psychological abnormality in Missouri's view of the converting act has been eliminated by the elaborate process of conversion through which he takes the *homo convertendus*; but he deceives himself.

With us, Dr. Keyser rejects synergism. He says:—

What we understand by synergism is this, that man by his *natural* powers is able to concur with God's grace. This idea we repudiate with all our might. So far as regards spiritual energies, true righteousness toward God, and ability to believe on a spiritual Redeemer, the unsaved sinner is "dead in trespasses and sins." How can a dead man do anything? How can a man who is spiritually dead do anything spiritual? Even if the Bible did not teach it plainly, it would still be psychically impossible for an unspiritual mind to perform spiritual functions. Moreover, a soul that is in the bondage of sin and corruption cannot act as if it were free. The fact is, if man could, by his natural ability, do *anything* truly and spiritually good without Christ, he might do *everything* that is spiritually good without Him, for then he might simply *develop* the spiritual powers within him. No, so far as doing *anything* spiritual and truly righteous before God is concerned, man, in his natural state of depravity, is utterly unable. (p. 65 f.)

We shall waive, for the present, a discussion as to what should properly be embraced under the term "synergism." Our prime object is to find a common basis, a joint belief between Dr. Keyser and ourselves, from which an intelligent discussion of the difference between him and us might start. We are willing to accept for such a basis the above statement of Dr. Keyser: *A spiritually dead person cannot do anything spiritual.*

This general statement Dr. Keyser has guarded against a possible misunderstanding and, in a manner, specialized, as follows:—

We shall humbly do our best to illumine another matter. Every Bible student, whether a theologian or not, must realize that spiritual death is not in all respects like physical death. In the spiritual realm the word "death" means the most corrupt and undone condition possible in that sphere. When a material body is dead, it is unconscious, but when a soul is dead to spiritual realities, it is not dead like that; it is not unconscious. Theologians usually distinguish three kinds of death—temporal, spiritual, and eternal. The sinner is in some respects very conscious and very much alive, though dead in other ways. Those who go down to eternal death—called in Scripture the "second death"—are neither unconscious nor quiescent, but recognize their doom, and suffer its pangs. The apostle indicates this truth in the passage so often quoted by all of us who believe in total depravity (Eph. 2, 1—3). We give the passage according to what we think the clearest translation: "And you were dead (*nekrous*) in (or *as to*) your trespasses and sins, in which ye once *walked* (Greek, *periepatesate*, walked or trod about) according to the ways of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; among whom we also once *lived* in the lusts of our flesh," etc. You will observe that those "dead" people "walked about" and "lived" even while they were dead. So Paul says in 1 Tim. 5, 6: "But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth."

Then what is the meaning of "dead in sin"? This: the spiritual powers of the soul have become atrophied, paralyzed, or deadened by sin, while the other psychical powers retain their ability to function, though, of course, all of them are sadly affected. When man sinned in the garden of Eden, he lost his original righteousness, his spiritual quality, his faith and love in and for God, and became alienated from

Him; but we know from the Bible itself that he did not lose his personality, his mental powers, his self-consciousness, his freedom in earthly affairs, his psychical emotion, nor even his conscience entirely. Moreover, he still retained his sight, hearing, and other senses. All these were permitted to remain through the intervening mercy of God, for He might justly have permitted man to be wholly destroyed. Strangely enough, Adam, though spiritually dead, was still, by virtue of his remaining psychical powers, even conscious that he had sinned, for he was ashamed, hid from God, and was afraid to meet Him. When God called him, he could hear the divine voice, and understand the words, and could make reply. However, he showed the depth of the infamy into which he had fallen — that is, his spiritual death-stroke — by refusing to repent and plead for pardon, but, on the contrary, even tried to justify himself by putting the blame upon the woman; while she, being in the same spiritual condition, tried to fix the blame upon the serpent. They were both dead and alive, those two, and their posterity has ever since inherited the same abnormal and paradoxical nature.

What, then, is this living death of the unconverted sinner? It is that deadened divine image that is within him; it is those corrupted and paralyzed spiritual powers. It is as if he were bearing a corpse about with him in his soul. It casts its terrible blight upon all his psychical faculties, the intellect, the susceptibility, the will. Even in his natural state he must often be conscious of the schism within and of the dead weight he carries about; but he becomes poignantly conscious of his blight and burden when the call of God sounds in his ears, and the blazing light of the Law reveals the hideous obliquity of his being. It is at this point that Paul exclaims in his despair: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" No sooner does the sinner utter this cry for help than God sheds upon him the sweet, mellow radiance of the Gospel, which reveals Christ to him as the only source of help; and so he again cries with Paul: "I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But while the sinner has a natural will, so that he is capable of a kind of "civil righteousness" (Augsburg Confession, Art. 18; Apology, p. 78), yet in the higher, the spiritual, matters it avails nothing; it is utterly helpless. As the Augsburg Confession puts it (Art. 18): "It has no power, without the Holy Ghost, to work the righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness, since the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; but this righteousness is wrought in the heart when the Holy Ghost is

received through the Word." The Formula of Concord (p. 557, Jacobs edition) insists on the same truth: "The reason and free will have the power, to a certain extent, to live an outwardly decent life; but to be born anew, and to obtain inwardly another heart, sense, and disposition, this only the Holy Ghost effects. He opens the understanding and heart to understand the Scriptures, and to give heed to the Word, as it is written (Luke 24, 25): 'Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.'" (pp. 68 ff.)

The view here expressed as regards "spiritual" and "psychical" powers of the soul we would decline as unnecessary because extra-Biblical. The phenomena of the spiritual death can be fully explained by saying that the quality of man's con-created intellect and will has been changed by the fall, so as to render them naturally unfit for performing an act that is pleasing to God. Furthermore, the manner in which Dr. Keyser connects "the call of God" with "the blazing light of the Law" we consider misleading. By the call we understand, only and exclusively, the Gospel offer of free and unconditioned salvation for Christ's sake. Lastly, Paul's exclamation: "O wretched man," etc., we regard as the sentiment of a converted person, not of one to be converted. So does the Form of Concord, p. 555, § 18. However, what Dr. Keyser says about "the total depravity" of fallen man, and his statement that "the natural will" of fallen man "avails nothing," and "is utterly helpless" "in the higher, the spiritual, things," is quite acceptable.

Dr. Keyser has in sundry places mentioned the Form of Concord with evident approval. The Form of Concord contains not only general statements regarding the total depravity of natural man, but it mentions a number of specific things that natural man cannot do, *e. g.*:—

In spiritual and divine things the intellect, heart, and will of the unregenerate man *cannot, in any way*, by their own natural powers, 1. understand, 2. believe, 3. accept, 4. think, 5. will, 6. begin, 7. effect, 8. do, 9. work, or 10. concur in working anything, but they are entirely dead to good, and corrupt, so that in man's nature, since the fall, there is, before regeneration, *not the least spark of spiritual power* remaining still present, by which, of himself, he can 1. prepare

himself for God's grace, or 2. accept the offered grace, or 3. for and of himself be capable of it, or 4. apply or accommodate himself thereto, or 6. by his own powers be able of himself to a) aid, b) do, c) work, d) or concur in working *anything* for his conversion, a) either entirely, b) or in half, c) or in even the least or most inconsiderable part, but he is the servant [and slave] of sin (John 8, 34; Eph. 2, 2; 2 Tim. 2, 26). *Hence the natural free will, according to its perverted disposition and nature, is strong and active only with respect to what is displeasing and contrary to God.* (p. 552, § 7. — Italics and numerations ours.)

This utter unfitness of natural man for spiritual acts the Form of Concord refers particularly and emphatically to the Gospel. It says:—

Although man's reason or natural understanding has still, indeed, a dim spark of the knowledge that there is a God, as also (Rom. 1, 19 sqq.) of the doctrine of the Law, yet it is so ignorant, blind, and perverted that when even the most able and learned men upon earth read or hear the Gospel of the Son of God and the promise of eternal salvation, they cannot, from their own powers, 1. perceive, 2. apprehend, 3. understand, or 4. believe and regard it true, but the more diligence and earnestness they employ in order to comprehend, with their reason, these spiritual things, *the less they understand* or believe, and, before they become enlightened or taught of the Holy Ghost, they regard all this *only* as foolishness or fictions. (p. 553, § 9.)

We should state here that in again numbering the acts for which the Form of Concord considers the natural man unfit, we have had no other purpose than to call attention to them. We attach no particular importance either to the number of these acts which are named, nor to the order in which they are named. We believe the confessors employ these terms as synonymous, as witness in the above citation "understand or believe," "enlightened or taught," and simply have heaped terms in order to express with the utmost force their belief that the *homo convertendus* is entirely, completely, altogether, unable to perform any and every spiritual act, or any and every part of a spiritual act; and that, as soon as this unfitness has been removed, and there is in him "the least spark of spiritual

power," "a spark of faith" (p. 563, § 54), he is no longer *homo convertendus*, but *homo conversus*. He is no longer dead, but alive, he is no longer turned away from, but to, God.

Our Lutheran laymen, as a rule, are not acquainted with the Form of Concord. But they all know Luther's Small Catechism. It is very meritorious, therefore, in the authors of the Form of Concord that they have not only cited (§§ 29—38, p. 558 f.) the consentient testimony of the earlier Lutheran Confessions on this matter, but also have reduced the whole matter to the lowest term, so to speak, by declaring that all they have stated is neither more nor less than what Luther expresses in these words of the Small Catechism: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Ghost has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith." (p. 560, § 40.) This enables any Lutheran layman to follow this discussion intelligently, and to judge of the merits of the position of either side. At the same time the immense importance of the discussion for the common faith of Lutherans becomes apparent, and the discussion cannot be denounced as a mere wrangling of theologians.

Let us see whether Luther cannot aid us in elucidating Lutheran teaching on this matter. His initial sentence in the explanation of the Third Article is an adversative clause, *i. e.*, it states contrary facts. First fact: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him." Second fact: "I believe that the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts," etc. What is it that is placed in opposition in these statements? In the first place: "my own reason or strength" and "the Holy Ghost"; in the second place, my inability to believe in Jesus Christ, or come to Him, and the calling and enlightening by the Gospel. But is there not a hiatus—is there not something missing in the second opposition? Expressed in the severest logical form, should not Luther have stated the matter thus:

“But when the Holy Ghost called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, I could believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him”? Yes. Why did he not do it? Because Luther felt no necessity to square his confessional statements with the grammar, logic, or psychology and ethics of the schools. In describing man’s conversion he did as Dr. Keyser says God does: “He did not label the various steps as we do in our theologies.” (p. 81.) Particularly, he did not draw that nice and mischievous distinction between “ability” and “act.”

Luther simply states a condition in natural man which every Christian acknowledges, and next, something that happens to this natural man. This, too, every Christian acknowledges. To the person dead in trespasses and sins the Gospel comes, which is “the power (*δύναμις*) of God for salvation,” Rom. 1, 16, which is “able (*δυνατός*) to make man wise unto salvation,” 2 Tim. 3, 15, which “effectually worketh” (*ἐνεργεῖται*), 1 Thess. 2, 13. By the gracious influence of the Gospel “the first spark of faith is kindled” in a person. He “accepts the forgiveness of sins for Christ’s sake, and comforts himself with the promise of the Gospel, and thus the Holy Ghost (who works all this) is given to the heart (Gal. 4, 6).” (p. 563, § 54.) Luther speaks of the origin of faith in man, or conversion, as the blind man in the Gospel related the restoration of his sight: “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” (John 9, 25.) “I cannot believe, but the Holy Ghost has enlightened me,”—that means: “My faith has been produced in me in the midst of my natural unfitness by the operation of the Holy Ghost.” That is a statement of the phenomena of his conversion such as the average Christian does make.

But this is “forced conversion,” “irresistible grace,” “coerced faith,” says Dr. Keyser. It is revolting to his ethics and psychology to take this view of the sinner’s conversion; for he sees in this simple soteriological event no place where the *homo convertendus* is given a chance to decide for or against the offer of grace that has come to him, no room for “consenting freedom.” Such a salvation, in Dr. Keyser’s view,

"would not be an ethical and spiritual salvation, but a coerced and mechanical one, which would be no salvation in the true sense of the term. Therefore, from the very nature of an ethical salvation, there must be an action of prevenient grace prior to conversion, which enables man in some way to exercise his will to the extent that he is willing to be converted." (p. 71 f.)

Prevenient grace is a matter of supreme importance to Dr. Keyser. "A proper estimate of God's holy prevenient grace," he says, "will save our theology from much confusion; will keep it from becoming lifeless and Procrustean." (p. 78.) Accordingly, we shall have to fix in our mind exactly the character and operation of prevenient grace.

Prevenient grace, in the first place, is not converting grace. This distinction is to Dr. Keyser "a vital fact." "Remember," he says, "this vital fact—that when the spiritual will is enabled, or affected, or created, as you please, by prevenient grace, the sinner is still not saved from his sin and corruption; that body of death still lies within him like a blight and hideous deformity." (p. 78.) Of this grace, then, it could not be said: "By grace are ye saved."

However, prevenient grace, in the second place, does not leave the sinner wholly unaffected. "He has been touched by a spiritual power, and is *not quite the same as before.*" (p. 66. Italics ours.) In an effort to understand Dr. Keyser at this point, which we believe to be a crucial point, we shall rehearse facts previously established: 1. Natural man is dead in trespasses and sins; 2. converted man has had "life breathed into him" (pp. 78. 83); 3. man under prevenient grace is not the same as before, nor as he will be when he is converted. Dr. Keyser distinguishes man's state under prevenient grace from man's "state of nature" (p. 66). Here is where we demur to the presentation of Dr. Keyser. This third state, which is neither death nor life, is to us a hybrid state and an ethical and psychological oddity. It does not fit into Acts 26, 18,

which, according to Dr. Keyser's view, should read: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to dawn, to light, and from the power of Satan to neutrality to God."

Prevenient grace has, in the third place, been assigned by Dr. Keyser "some enabling power prior to conversion," and he is "wondering whether any of our brethren will try to find some 'cryptic synergism' here." (p. 65.) Let us see in what way prevenient grace "enables" the *homo convertendus*. "Prevenient grace gives all a chance, and therefore locates the responsibility; regenerating grace bestows the new life, and enables saving faith; faith accepts justification, by which all Christ's merits are imputed to the believer, which is the sole ground of his salvation; progressive sanctification develops, and unfolds the inherent righteousness enabled by regeneration or conversion." (p. 65.) This is Dr. Keyser's *ordo salutis*. Again, he says: "After God awakens and illumines sinners, and after He graciously offers them salvation thus provided, then, and then only, is their own choice decisive; but it is decisive then, for at that point their free moral agency respecting the gracious overture comes into play. If this is not true, we repeat again that the grace bestowed in conversion must be 'irresistible grace,' and that is Calvinism, not Lutheranism." (p. 66 f.) Here we learn that prevenient grace is in operation during the call and illumination, and that it creates in man a free moral agency, enabling him to make a choice. Again: "Just as the will is enabled by converting and sanctifying grace to perform its function in these moments, so it is enabled by preparatory grace to perform its relevant function in that moment. Its function in the latter case is that of passivity or surrender towards God's grace; in the former, that of activity, concurrence, and cooperation." (p. 77.) It will be difficult to find for this state of passivity a place in the citations from the Book of Concord afore noted. Besides, a passivity which effects the sinner's surrender to God's grace is not so very passive. Prevenient grace, according to Dr. Keyser, may also be called

“preparatory grace, not converting grace.” (p. 80.) As such it “produces conviction of sin.” (pp. 78. 80.) This conviction is “a spiritual *motus* or condition of the soul” (p. 78), “an inner spiritual *motus*” (p. 80). If it is followed up, as in the instance of Peter’s Pentecostal audience, by more exhortation, it brings the sinner “to the yielding point.” (p. 81.) This might be called “added prevenient grace.” The first impressions of prevenient grace have “awakened” the sinner, and have brought him “to his knees in humble confession and supplication.” The sinner “prays to God for help,” and when this point has been reached, God will “enable him freely to cease his resistance, freely to surrender himself to God alone, yea, even to cease trying to save himself.” “Having led him thus far, so that he utterly despairs of self-help, and given himself up entirely to God, God flies to his rescue, breathes into his soul the new spiritual life, which is regeneration, in and by which the ability of faith is conferred upon him, then, by this divinely enabled faith, he lays hold upon Christ as his Savior and Redeemer; and this exercise of faith, a power given purely by grace, brings justification.” (p. 63.) This description of the effects of preparatory grace is full of ambiguities and incongruities. We hear of a grace that convicts of sin, hence, discharges the function of the Law. This grace causes the sinner to pray for help. Now, if this prayer is not for help which the sinner knows to be available, and believes to be available for him, it is sin, according to Rom. 14, 23. The sinner surrenders himself to God under the influence of this grace, hence God has become to him an “*objectum amabile*.” And yet, he is not converted, he has not the faith that justifies. He must now wrestle like Jacob for converting grace, which “breathes life into him” and bestows faith, and that faith he must “exercise” in order to obtain salvation. Where in Scripture, where in the Confessions of our Church, has Dr. Keyser found this soteriological sequence of events? This teaching is full of Roman leaven. We would not like to discharge the

ministry of an evangelical pastor according to this teaching. For, verily, we would not know how to comfort a soul that is in these preparatory stages, and wants to know whether it is become a child of God. What terrible practical consequences loom up right at this point? Nor is Dr. Keyser's presentation of these matters as calm and clear as it should be. He is too oratorical; he indulges in exclamations and rhetorical questions; with all his efforts at nice distinctions he does not keep Law and Gospel distinct. As a result, his effort confuses.

But, though these exceptions, which we would state in a spirit of sincere pity, are serious, what perplexes us still more is one question above all the rest that must here arise; it is this: This prevenient grace, or preparatory grace—must the sinner receive and accept *it*? We mean, of course, the sinner of whom Dr. Keyser has told us that he is dead, absolutely incapable of performing a spiritual act. In other words, how does God get this preparatory grace into the sinner? Is there another preparatory grace before this one that Dr. Keyser has presented? If so, how does that find lodgment in the sinner's heart? By a third kind of preparatory grace? And that by a fourth? Where do we stop? We submit these questions with the earnest wish to induce Dr. Keyser to take them up and answer them, not to perplex him. For at this point Dr. Keyser has proved wholly unsatisfactory to us, and we know that he has disturbed and confused the mind of other well-meaning and sincere persons by his violent protestations against Missouri's irresistible grace and his strong assurances of belief in original sin. If Dr. Keyser will reexamine his position at this point, he will find that he will have to do one of two things: Either he must surrender his belief in man's total depravity, or he must declare that he can save the entrance of prevenient grace into a sinner's heart as little from the charge of Calvinism as he thinks he can save Missouri's converting grace from that charge. Every ethical and psychological objection that he raises against Missouri must be raised against

himself, as long as he maintains the total depravity of natural man in spiritual matters.

Dr. Keyser himself has felt the weakness of his position. He says: "At this point the inquiry may be raised: How can the will have any spiritual ability to function before the sinner is converted?" This inquiry—which, by the way, we are inclined to regard as a self-inquiry, a question which the Christian conscience in Dr. Keyser asks of the ethical and psychological reason in Dr. Keyser—is very much to the point, wholly relevant, and almost shrieks for an answer. Here is Dr. Keyser's answer: "It would be more pertinent to ask: How can God convert a man against his will?" (p. 77 f.) Pardon, Dr. Keyser, this is not answering, but side-stepping, a pertinent question. Here is your *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!* and you yourself have conjured it up. Your answer is an evasion and amounts to saying: "I should have to cancel my chief, if not only, objection to Missouri's position if I were to answer the above question in the negative." However, this negative answer every one who judiciously and attentively reads your book will draw for you from your own premises, *viz.*, from your statement of the total depravity of fallen man in spiritual affairs. — Nor is Dr. Keyser's answer a few lines further down a whit better. "Perhaps," he says, "some one will object that there can be no spiritual movement in the soul before conversion. Then, why speak at all of the Holy Spirit's preparatory acts?" (p. 78.) We have indicated the "vicious circle" in Dr. Keyser's reasoning at this point: he employs one inexplicable fact to explain another. He must either admit that God hurls His prevenient grace into man *volens volens*, and that man does not receive it all in an "ethical" way, as he charges Missouri with believing, or he must believe that the sinner receives prevenient grace with his *natural* powers. Hence, by introducing "prevenient grace" in the matter, he has not relieved the ethical and psychological tension which he has discovered in this matter. In the same category belong such remarks of Dr. Keyser: "God never commands without conferring the ability to obey, 'if

there first be a willing mind.'” (p. 83.) “The command with the conferred ability would have been absurd; but the man had a willing mind, and so Christ gave him strength to walk and even to carry his couch. ‘So is every one that is born of the Spirit.’” If ever the Gospel was excoriated, here is an instance. Quite correctly Dr. Keyser declares a soteriological command an *imperativus evangelicus*, as our older dogmaticians would say. What God commands in a Gospel way, that He confers. But Dr. Keyser seems not to see that as soon as he attaches his “if” clause to the above statement, he changes the Gospel command to as categorical an *imperativus legalis* as any that could be invented. For now the poor sinner—and for such the Gospel is designed—begins to lose hope and is thrust out into the ocean of doubt and despair, because he has not that “willing mind,” and he cannot obtain it except God give it him.

It is a matter of extreme regret that Dr. Keyser should have spoiled his great effort at studying the deepest matters in our religion by reviving old slanders which in a time of heat and passion were raised against Missouri. He has not given evidence that he has read very much at first hand about the teaching of Missouri. And what a great literature has sprung up about the mooted points in the conversion-election controversy! It is a great pity, too, that Dr. Gerberding has so injudiciously heralded the book of Dr. Keyser, which should have been thoroughly revised before it was issued. If personal assurances could be of any avail in this matter, we would assure Dr. Keyser, and all who have accepted his statements about Missouri’s teaching, that no Missourian believes as they think Missourians believe. This whole talk about force and coercion and irresistible grace in Missouri’s teaching of conversion is a nightmare of some American Lutheran theologians. Missourians believe that the Father draws sinners by the genial and mighty influences of His Gospel, but that sinners may resist His influences at any point. Missourians also believe in preparatory acts to conversion, only they do not make them

internal *motus* in the sinner's heart, but efforts from without on the part of the Holy Spirit to open the heart of the sinner and enter it. When all those fine things happen which Dr. Keyser sees happening in the *homo convertendus*, he is already a *homo conversus*. Divine grace is not such a sluggard as Dr. Keyser would make it out to be: it does its work of reclamation in a much quicker and much simpler way than Dr. Keyser believes. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," says Paul. (2 Cor. 3, 17.) Dr. Keyser has put the Spirit of the Lord into the sinner, but refuses to put liberty there. "As dew from the womb of the morning" Zion obtains its "youth," *i. e.*, children are born to God in the Church by a silent and wonderful power which no one can watch. This statement of Ps. 110, 3, as Luther has translated it, and modern exegesis has endorsed his rendering, puts a heavy discount on our ethical and psychological explanations. Dr. Keyser, strangely enough, after all his previous psychological and ethical labor, remarks at the end of his book: "Just so we who accept the plain and simple Gospel preach to sinners to 'come and take of the water of life freely,' without troubling ourselves about the psychological mysteries involved; just as we see without bothering much about the mysteries of optics, and breathe without the mysteries of respiration, and eat without trying to figure out all the unsolved problems of digestion and assimilation." This is a fine sentiment excellently expressed. But throughout his book Dr. Keyser has done the very thing which he rejects as useless in this place.

We cannot quit this subject without giving expression to a sad reflection that has been present with us throughout the reading of Dr. Keyser's dissertation. Is there not in his constant appeal to the ethics and psychology of the sinner's salvation a pretty strong grain of rationalism, of which Dr. Keyser may not be conscious at all? Is there not in his view of the matter some of the age-long offense at a salvation by "the foolishness of preaching"? We say this with no desire to insinuate, merely to invite inquiry. Dr. Keyser, in many parts

of his book, has spoken with so much candor, and his book, in spite of its untenable positions, is still such a remarkable effort, that we should consider it a splendid gain to himself in a spiritual way and to our whole Church, if he could rid himself of the wrong views which he has permitted himself to entertain about Missouri.

D.