*THE NEW PLUTARCH*

# MARTIN LUTHER

# THE NEW PLUTARCH.

## Edited by Walter Besant, M.A., and Rev. W. J. Brodribb, M.A.

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# MARTIN LUTHER

JOHN H. TREADWELL

"Who so stood out against the holy church
The great metropolitan [illegible] of Rome."


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# EDITORS' PREFACE.

THE name of Martin Luther is perhaps one of the best known, as it is certainly one of the noblest and most honourable of all names. To us English at home, and to our kinsfolk abroad, scattering themselves in ever increasing numbers throughout every region of the world, it ought to be specially dear. Yet there are few great men whose lives have been so few and far between, or of whose personal character and private history most people know so little. If the average reader asks himself what facts of Luther's life he knows, he will most certainly have to confess that all he knows may be written on a sheet of note-paper. He was a monk; he was a Reformer; he married; he threw a bottle of ink at the devil; he was an enthusiastic lover of music; his Table Talk has been preserved: these are the points which are familiar to him. Surely the infinite debt of gratitude due to Luther from the modern world, for its best and truest freedom, lays upon us the obligation of knowing all that can be known about the life and the teachings of the man who, after the great Divine Reformer, has wielded the mightiest reforming influences on the hearts of men, and whom we cannot but regard as the very soul and spirit of a movement second only in its far-reaching issues to the first preaching of Christianity.

We add this book to our series in great confidence that it will be welcomed, and will prove, in the

highest sense of the word, a useful work; a book for all ages, and for all sorts and conditions of men; a book which will lead the reader to think better of mankind and more hopefully of the future; a book which will make the sturdy German stand before us a strong and living figure, whose eyes we can discern, and whose robes we can touch; a man of whom, above all other men, it may be said that he was a man of action. After all, the only question of importance about a dead man is—what did he do?

The author of this book is an American. He brings to his work not only the necessary knowledge, but also the necessary enthusiasm for his subject. Without love and respect a biographer's work is like the crackling of thorns beneath a pot; unless the writer of a life be himself filled with the deeds, thoughts, and aims of his subject, his book is of no more value than a catalogue of facts by the learned Dr. Dryasdust. The note of sympathy has been struck by Mr. Treadwell; he has caught the inspiration of the living soul of the great enemy of superstition; he presents him to us, not a marble statue, but a living man, with a heart full of tenderness and love. His style at times reminds us that our language is undergoing, across the Atlantic, certain small changes which we have not yet adopted. To expunge or alter these things would have been a great sin against the work.

W. B.
W. J. B.

NOVEMBER, 1881.

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# MARTIN LUTHER.

## CHAPTER I.

### PRE-LUTHERAN GERMANY.

THE roads to greatness are ever open; but the roads to that greatness which shall confer on future ages and nations a permanent gift are few. Great epochs call for correspondingly great men; whether they come through the ordinary channels of promotion, or project themselves from unexpected sources upon the theatre of action, we need not inquire—at all events they come.

Doubtless the bent of German thought, or even unspoken convictions, will have much to do with educating the future man who shall spring to the emergency. Why may not the weight upon the heart be transmitted from generation to generation as well as the pouch-mouth or hooked nose, or other physical peculiarity? Latently it may be: perhaps

passing through many generations, unobserved, yet cropping out at last when circumstances are ripe for its effectiveness. We cannot believe that the leader of a crisis merely explodes with passionate impulses; something more subtle than passion deals with preponderating error.

Germany, the great Germany, had for many years, centuries even, stood at the right hand of the chair of St. Peter, with casque and halberd ready to charge upon the unfaithful, or defend against intruders. Her knightly men were over the borders everywhere, with the name of God and the Pope on their lips, inoculating other races with the religion in which they had been educated; who yielded not, died by their swords. Nothing but corruption and treachery at home prevented the banner of the Church from waving over the accessible world.

There was no effeminacy here, no half-service; from their mothers' breasts even they had drawn that manful resolution, that fixedness of purpose, which, as an ally invaluable, was destined at last to prove an unconquerable alien.

A race of workers, by nature and birth aggressive, they grew like forest trees, from the olive to the North Sea, crowding and contending, erecting among those hills and dales a population not to be cajoled

with trifles or subjected by oppression. They fought and lugged at each other because no foreign foe had a capacity for fighting and lugging equal to themselves. Germany was the cockpit of the world, wherein the weaker went down, and the fittest—fittest for a work to come—were surviving. With all this tilting and sword-practice, at home they were a serious, thinking people, reasoned carefully and slowly; no development of history, were it normal or deformed, passed them without scrutiny. Birth, nature, and education endowed them with a chivalrous spirit which spread itself at last over the German-speaking world.

When other nations were loitering, steeped in the emasculating pleasures of Italian degeneracy, or prone under the thumb of a debauched court, she, all her people, were forging that strong substructure upon which was built a future nobleness of character.

Nut-headed and bull-necked, and with no ostentation of purposes, yet how superbly do they bear the burden imposed by these centuries of eventful history. Reverse or triumph, aggregation or depletion, Germany goes on unfaltering in the assurance that principle insisted on must at last rule events.

Whether it be blind Johann, at the battle of Crécy, tying his bridle to that of the knight next him and

riding into the fray, or Markgraf George, the pious, rising before that Augsburg Diet—year 1530—where Kaiser Karl sat at the head and heard the protest against the performances of *Corpus Christi* day, the impulse in each case is identical. Overwhelming consciousness of right admitted no other action, even though it were death for Johann and discrownment for the Brandenburg prince. This unselfish independence and love of liberty was pervading all that part of the continent where the German tongue was heard.

Not in the spirit of rebellion, untainted by those social fanaticisms which later on turned thousands away from obedience to common law; no madmen were wanted in this progressive drama, but with calm certainty, if slowly, approached the daylight of intelligence, like a new revelation, transforming, transposing, concentrating the potent forces which soon were to work unitedly for the lasting good of a great nation. Unity of thought was there, a saturation of truth, unconsciously waiting the presence of that vicarious instrument upon which it might instantly crystallise and develop.

Professed public opinion was no barrier to this progressive thought, promising to open, as it did, a new domain and broader intelligence, disenthrall-

ing generations to come, giving significance to a language afterward to be adorned by Lessing, Wieland, Lavater, and even a Goethe and a Schiller. What human obstruction could long withhold a flood like this? Such a revolution was not to be projected by mean or desultory influences. The spirit of adventure was to have no part in leading events, nor was ambition to rule the impulse in that changing hour. Abnegation, character above reproach, scholarship, backed by herculean fearlessness and physique, are qualities rarely combined; but the coming man must possess all these, and more. An athlete commands the respect of his vicinity only; let him possess, in addition, those essentials of character which point to a higher manhood, and his conquests may be as far reaching as tongues can bear his name.

The bulls possessed by the young Emperor Karl, crowned for Germany at Aix la Chapelle, year 1530, and destined to take a leading part in the great drama, were formidable weapons. The Tiberian hound had already scented danger, and was quickly upon the trail. Germany had just been galled a little by the venture of the Pope to set Francis I. on the throne. Before leaving the court of assembled princes at Frankfort, however, the Papal ambassadors were forced to sign conditions which bound them to the

advocacy of a German prince for German soil; offices throughout the empire, too, must be conferred on native blood; the language of the court—diplomatic language—must be either German or Latin; and, further, the regnant prince must reside in Germany. The demand was pregnant with force, for there were soldiers in Germany ready to give emphasis to these requirements.

Here see the national quality making itself effective; the strife for individuality was not to be despised; whatever future developments might bring, policy was the controlling power now. Gratuitous patronage of Church or State, when it placed in jeopardy the liberties of this people or collided with their sensibilities, was sure to be met with public disfavour. Secular or religious public opinion was directed towards the unobstructed advance of the whole people, even to the point of autonomy.

Markgraf George did not speak for himself alone when before that Augsburg Diet he affirmed impetuously, but in words which left no room for misunderstanding, "Before I would deny my God and His Evangel, I would kneel here before your majesty and have my head struck off." See that Kaiser of like blood half rising from his chair at the burning words, trying indeed to modify their severity!

Read it as you may, translate it as you may, it meant—We, the German people, love liberty, the exercise of our own free will, whether it concern the bodies or the souls of men.

The same spirit wrote upon the banners of John the Steadfast *V.D.M.I.E., Verbum Diaboli Manet In Episcopis*—The devil's word sticks fast in the bishops—and who but brave men dare utter such heresy.

Albert's rhyming prayer, too, came of the same impulse :

> "*Das walt der Herr Jesus Christ*
> *Mit dem Vater, der über uns ist;*
> *Wer stärker ist als dieser mann*
> *Der Kom und thu ein Leid mir an.*"
>
> "Guide it the Lord Jesus Christ;
> With the Father who over us is,
> He that is stronger than man,
> Let him do me hurt when he can."[1]

We may oppose and disintegrate error; law can put its foot upon the neck of mischief and it dare not rise; but popular truth, once started on its errand, is invincible.

Germany—the unlettered Germany of those days—

[1] Carlyle's translation.

stood by and saw the arts and sciences crowning the Italian hills with palaces, crowding them with grace and colour, the hand-word and head-work of intelligent men; meanwhile the purses of her contributors grew thin.

All roads led towards Rome; through them came tribute from every hand, building up and beautifying that splendid monument of Christian industry and devotion. In return she dispensed, with every possible show of favour, her pragmatic indulgences, bones of the saints, bits of the true cross and miraculous reliquaries, holding firmly meanwhile the conscience-strings as well as the purse-strings of those devout and faithful ones who paid her homage.

"Why not do this all at home?" argued the logical German. "Why not educate and erect and beautify here, have our own books, our own pictures, yes, even our own hierarch?" But there was no man good enough or great enough to be the hierarch of this coming epoch; no vicegerent to stand between them and God; no one but themselves to expound the books they should read with their own eyes.

There were more parts than one to this grand revolution; if it meant protest and reformation, it meant also revival, rehabilitation; a time from which new affairs should date, and *pre* should be written

before the affairs that had passed. No feeble, timid exception, but a manly *no!* The vehicle to carry this bulky exploit must be a mighty one, must furnish a permanent motive power also. Juggernaut never tottered through its ancient streets with half such a load; but three men were coming to help to construct this car of Parnassus—Coster, Guttenberg, Faust. No concert of action, little dreaming, perhaps, that theirs was to be the privilege of sounding through the ages that certain note of freedom which goes forth from an unobstructed typography. That charter of civilisation, the Bible, yet remained within the walls of the Vatican, escaping only now and then in fragments, to exhibit the monkish craft of brush and pencil rather than to spread abroad its Gospel of truth; attributes of art rather than motives to progress.

But progress was coming in spite of detention, as though by supernatural direction all the forces intellectual were moving in the ascendant.

"A certain uncommon and malignant position of the stars which scattered the spirit of giddiness and innovation over the world" provoked this change, says Jovius, writing with the astrological tincture. Not so; no need to go among the stars or look to any transcendent source for this radical revolution;

all the causes were plain enough, plain and irresistible. As wine purifies itself, as nature goes on improving and perfecting, so must men unfold and develop, consciously or voluntarily, with the broadest philanthropy or from selfish motives, for personal or public benefit; in the course of affairs, last things must be best. The Reformation, which engrafted a new branch on the Christian stock, was only one of many; when everything was ready, the gates were opened for a sequence of reformations in which religion, literature, science, art, all the intellectual forces, were to take part on the road of continued progression.

Even Erasmus did not forget to thank Marguerite for *two* services—"her protection to good literature and to the men sincerely loving Christ," because she had prevailed on Francis that he should not carry out the demand of the clergy and "extirpate the damnable and insupportable Lutheran sect." Erasmus knew that literature once fairly planted was invincible, no matter if they built bonfires of books in every street, and added thousands of titles to the *Index Expurgatorius*. No autocratic power could command back the flood of letters. No power on earth could reinstate the secular dictation of Rome where intelligence and reason took wings of their

own. Were it mere revolt, a paltry passage at arms in which brute force alone should assert itself, this reformation would have been crushed at the outset. Knights without number, brave ones, too, stood ready for the command of the hierarchy; a whirlwind of spears, thick as grain in the field, would have fallen upon the disaffected. But chivalry weakened, tottered, fell back when it found nothing to beat but the winds, and no foe save public opinion, printer's ink, and paper. Jousts and tourneys, feudal pageantry and crusading troop, were doomed, vanished into obscurity, when that silent but effective agent took the field to conquer not the bodies but the minds of men.

Solitary protest could have accomplished no such results. "Give me," says the scholar, "not the man who dwells long upon the causes, but the one who proposes a cure."

The Roman authority over the consciences of men had been long conceded, as well as the carnal authority; its logic was, "so long as *we* keep all the learning, *we* keep all the power."

The ecclesiastical court at Rome was a congress of learning, wit, and shrewd diplomacy, kept so by far-reasoning, far-sighted Popes and councils well tutored in the secrets that made the Romish Church mighty.

The Church of Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons A.D. 177–202, was "the locality of God's spirit; where God's spirit was, there was the Church." Later, prelacy sought to give it a further significance, loaded this purity of purpose with attributes foreign to it, with laws, commands, threats; put to the sword all opposing force, and called this the triumph of Christ.

However potent the religion of Christ may be, it meant to win, not to command, the obedience of men; chicanery has no part in that symmetrical and simple story of the gospels. Except for sectarian or selfish purposes, *no assemblage of men can pronounce the final meaning of these gospels.* Distort the figure as you will, you cannot avoid individual interpretation; if you would have free men, they must have free wills. When Germany excepted to the dictation of Rome, this fact premised her reasoning; Christians who protested against the assumptions of the great church did so on these very grounds.

The great church must not resort to these pagan methods to authority; cultivated superstition could not long lead where enlightenment was breaking through. Superstition, darkness, subjugation for the people, light, liberty, and license for the court, were political deformities to be disposed of, attacked, and, even by slow methods, reduced to consistent dimen-

sions. The deeds that were damned among the commonalty were the very ones eating away all but the title of the Vatican Court; intrigue and excess were destroying its manhood; the pure church that Irenæus would have was foundering in a slough of corruption; rottenness was hiding behind the smoke of censers. Was it extraordinary that the *odium theologicum* grew farcical and inefficient? Was it strange that men and women, offspring of those found by Tacitus—who himself pictures the character—"There no one smiles at vice, and to seduce or be seduced is not called fashionable; for among the Germans good morals effect more than good laws"—was it strange they grew to denunciation?

Reformation and protestation were the first evidences of spiritual improvement. Where honour and dishonour live together, vice is in the ascendant; so they struck off dishonour. There was no ambitious outcry for a new church, no new church was hinted at in the first declaration, but the sequence of events that followed involved organisation, resolved at last into a perpetual society of protest. Blind Johann knew that Crécy was to be his last, yet unfalteringly pursued the course by conscience dictated. Men of like temperament were to be more numerous in after years, so had the nation been growing up through genera-

tions of heroism until at last all were heroes. At Crécy or in the Diet at Worms the character is the same; inflexibility, equilibrium, integrity were the qualities above all. Both instances discover the same deliberate ardour; no selfish purposes to serve, no phantom of adventure, but an irresistible, glorious refulgence, this dawning of a new era.

Man's most exalted achievement in letters is the mastery of his native tongue. The nation lowest in the scale of progress, lowest in comparative civilisation, is always that one adding least to the literature and research of its time. When the congress of princes demanded that the diplomatic language should be either German or Latin, they struck a note that was to resound in lasting benefits to their nation.

Plainly, they wanted the German; their strength and good will was too valuable to be thrown away by the Roman Court; policy would grant them their request, but prompted by national pride, a desire for individuality, it is not likely they conceived the possibilities of the future. Germany was a broad territory of mixed dialects. Learned and eminent men who could readily transcribe the Latin and the Greek were yet unable to write their own language, called it boorish even, useful only for common talk. Back in the ninth century it was shreds and patches, but grew

better as time passed, assuming form and comeliness. The usages of the Court must help it greatly, even though scholars shook their heads and called it a mistake. German coin was rattling into the coffers at Rome; in return, the country was flooded with obsequious indulgences; bits of parchment for barter and sale by the Dominican friars, who made broad their phylacteries to cover the multitude of sins with which the ecclesiastical court was pregnant; abused their agency, some say—if abuse were possible—overcharged a little, pilfered a little, forged a little; in short, grew rotten morally—a kind of mortification not originally prescribed for the order—became so obnoxious, indeed, that some of the brothers themselves revolted.

Yet a large part of the writing of this pre-Lutheran period was done by these parchment brokers. During the ninth century one Otfried, of Weisenburg, monk—pupil of Rhabanus Maurus—had been industrious enough, zealous for his mother tongue, to translate the Gospel into German verse, "in order that the people might read it," it was said. But multiplying presses were not then available, only one copy for these millions to read, so it was shelved alongside of other precious curiosities. "Not yet time, not yet time," as whispered Kaiser Frederick—

the old man of the mountain when awakened by the astonished peasant.

Germany was not yet seasoned, or even these gospels might have set her aflame. Sometime in Otfried's generation the Latin Psalmody and church music were introduced by Charles; an Italian, journeying that way, was struck by the rude and harsh notes; he said these people were "great in body like the mountains, their voices rolled forth like thunder, could not be modulated into gentler tones." He was "startled and terrified," accustomed probably to the mellifluous accent of his native church. Yet the church organ of Pope John VIII.—a few years later—was brought from Germany, and with it a German player who excelled in his art, so readily and rapidly did this people take to music.

Give them a chance, and they would get away speedily enough from their *faust-recht*—their fist-law—and abandon their "bellowing and roaring." Dictation alone hindered the natural growth in any intelligent direction. Becoming too wise was a menace to the supreme power; such people must be diverted. Put forth a bull showing the enormity of this sin; stop this ambition of the people, and shed the blood of those who promote it. So suffered and died John Huss; his hand was upon the lock of free-

dom, but was not strong enough to draw the bolt that had rusted in its place.

But this expanding intelligence was not dependent on any one man, it was among the things inevitable; and the one man was only that one who should give it voice—construct that for which the materials had already been gathered; a man with fearlessness enough, and learning enough, and good nature enough to work right on and counterblast the tempest that was sure to interrupt him.

Let what may be said to the contrary, the Mystics and Vaudois were educating the people to the crisis; they anticipated, perhaps, this coming man, set their houses in order high up in the Piedmontese Alps, and devoutly prayed and watched for the rising of that new sun: *Illuminati*—planting their beacons there in the high mountains that others might see and be guided thereby. But men were not yet guiding their own craft. Too timid they were to push off alone; some one must come with a hearty good will to help them off, and say to them, "go there; if the wind be not always fair, beat up against it, but make your own course." These pious men wanted the material that made up the people in the country to the north of them. Let the tiara put a

little more contempt on the German Crown, and there will be "thundering and bellowing" such as shall shake the foundations of St. Peter's, and deflect the temporal as well as the spiritual power; a revolution that will involve not Germany alone but the Christian world.

Through the streets of Munich was going that poor cobbler boy, Hans Sachs, singing hymns "to the honour of God." Scholarly men like Frederick and Reuchlin and Erasmus were giving tenor to the dawning age of liberty and letters. "Time not yet, but will be soon," says the grey-bearded Kaiser seated within the Salzburg hill. No haste about this event, for it is sure.

Germany had not yet risen from her cradle of forest. The Rhine and the Danube and the Elbe flowed on through abundant shade.

Pliny saw there trees whose broad foliage and "monstrous trunks surpassed by their powerful vitality all other wonders of nature." Had he waited, he might have seen men of like character hewing into this vast workshop of nature, and when they had hewed and cut and cultivated here they were ready for grander work. The Thuringia of our day is still a wealth of forest, broken here and there by broad fields, and towns and cities whose foundations reach

down to a period so remote that their history evaporates in generalities.

Travellers go that way, attracted by its picturesqueness, led by guide-books—those alder-staves of weak-kneed tourists—up and down through venerable edifices, along solitary but much frequented foot-paths, scratching their names on Wartburg, or procuring, if they can, a piece of Luther's ink-blot, renewed at intervals to meet the public demand.

This was the background of that great play which was to divide Christianity. Germany, France, England were pregnant with anxiety. Whence was to come the child of whom no Elias had spoken—of whom all Germany was to be the mother and the world the father—no one knew.

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY DAYS.

YEAR of our Lord 1483. Every crown in Europe subject to the Papal sceptre. People not altogether in sympathy because they were chafing under involuntary burdens. In Germany the industrial arts were in the first stages of progress. In the crownless intervals she was still, however, given over to *faust-recht*. Predatory knights gathered their plunder into hill-top castles, but gunpowder was likely to interfere somewhat with blade and spur chivalry, while the innovations of Guttenberg and Faust were drawing attention in other directions, making broader the avenues to learning, and teaching those who otherwise would not have been taught.

The German was a man of rude exterior and forcible speech; expletives and oaths gave emphasis to his utterances; ever did, and do now for that matter; not, however, in a casual or blasphemous

way, for there was fire in his blood. He did not indulge in delicacy of expression, but nailed his meaning with impressive declaration—like Seneca, perhaps, believing "that fellow who was careful about his words, and neat in his speech, to be busied about toys and wanting solidity."[1] No time for nice-mouthed people this era of disruption and difference, no halting for soft words; throw off your genteel, mannerly folk; let them fall back to non-combative uselessness, for here is a train of circumstances to be met by something besides conservatism and policy.

Hans or John Luther dwelt in Upper Saxony, in the pastoral village of Moerha, or Moer, high up in the Thuringer Wald, not far distant from Eisenach. Gretha or Margaret Lindeman, whom he married, was a serving-maid in the baths there, esteemed much for her gentleness, piety, and comeliness; tradition has it that she came from Nieustadt, in Franconia.

Poverty and piety seem to have been the estate of this pair, trained up, no doubt, in that rude but devout simplicity which made men and women of character, if it failed to promote surface-culture.

Some wind of fortune blew them from their origi-

[1] "Senec. Epist.," Lib. i. 21.

nal home; ambition for something more than peasant life, perhaps; but rumour has it that Hans was a homicide, had actually made away with a fellow-peasant who chanced to trespass on his acreage. Perhaps one of those altercations not uncommon among the peasantry, but more sanguinary in its results. So they came to Eisleben, and shortly after coming a son was born to them. Concerning the exact date of his birth there seems to have been much discussion; tradition and record, however, incline to November 10th, 1483—the eve of St. Martin's—so came his forename.

John Luther, become a miner here in Eisleben, in time had other issue, which was rather lost sight of behind this majestic first son. He was doubtless a lover of wit and learning, tinctured with them to some extent himself, for at Melancthon's marriage he, being present, sat with the doctors, helenists, and savans; some distinction in that day of few books.

Before Martin was a year old his parents moved to Mansfeld, where the father grew in importance, came somewhat out of the cloud of adversity and peasant plainness, was made a town councillor, and owned two small iron furnaces, though still very poor as commerce measures the man.

That he was a man of austerity Martin's own

words assure us; the family sceptre was a birchen rod, wielded mercilessly, no matter how trivial the offence; intervals of exemption from it at home were made up by the village pedagogue, who believed in the same sort of discipline.

The child was not spared. For the theft of a hazel-nut his mother whipped him till the blood came, and at school he was one day treated fifteen times to the rod; nor did he remember it with composure in after years—he denounced it, in fact. "My parents," he says, "treated me cruelly, so that I became timid. They felt that they were sincerely right; but they had no discernment of character, which is absolutely necessary, that we may know when, on whom, and how punishment should be inflicted."

The elements that made the boy Luther incorrigible were the ones that made the man Luther noble. Terrorism—Tartarism, rather—that had so long worked mischief in Germany, was instilled in all the German blood, inspiring with awe at first, afterward engendering obstinacy and combativeness; Tartarism, encouraged by the cunning policy of Rome to make itself acceptable.

Luther's manhood, however, rose superior to the harsh ordeals of his childhood, remembered only the

allegiance due to those who gave him birth, and consecrated their memory in his formula of marriage —"*Hans*, wilt thou take *Gretha?*"—and, on the death of his father, writes to Melancthon, "'tis my pious duty to weep for him whom the Father of mercy destined to give me birth—for him by whose labour and sweat God nourished me, and made me what I am, such as that is."

Under such training was the cynosure of the future growing up, not like a creeping vine, as it listeth, but trained up, tutored up, "*ad agnitione et timore Dei*" —in the knowledge and fear of God. *Timore* emphatically, for in religion, as in other things, the Tartar doctrine was orthodox in that day. It was a religion of terrors, from Omnipotence all the way down to the confessional. Phantoms, devils, and the beast of the Apocalypse, beset like an incubus this degenerate faith.

We may direct men's bodies by force, but something subtler than force it is that diverts their minds.

Luther was six years old, and already quick at his books, when he was sent to the Eisenach school; penniless, friendless, forlorn; paying his way by singing before the doors of patrician houses, and taking alms. As for singing in the streets, that invited no contempt, was common, in fact, throughout Germany.

Fortune had few darlings, philanthropy fewer, though a certain kindliness kept these little people from starving, opened the lattice and dropped bread or its equivalent into the hands of these singing children—afterward, perhaps, quarrelled for the honours of those who had one day begged in the streets. But such is history through all time. Adversity is a prompter to betterment when it does not lean toward indifference and pauperism.

Four years Luther studied at Eisenach, singing his way some, helped more by the "pious Shunamite," Ursula Cotta, widow of one whose compassion and means had contributed much before.

Long afterward, looking back through years that gilded the distance and wiped out the hungry hours, Luther speaks of "Eisenach, my own dear Eisenach."

Later on he went to the Bernburg *currend schule*—a system perpetuated to this day—he remained there only one year, however, returning to Eisenach year 1498. Here, under Trebonius—famous in his time, rector of the convent of Barefooted Carmelites—he studied grammar, rhetoric, and poesy, expanding now into the larger future, studious and ready with his books. Trebonius taught his scholars self-respect as well as respect for himself. "I uncover my head," he

says, "to honour the consuls, chancellors, doctors, masters who shall one day proceed from this school." No fist-law or Tartarism in that kindly encouragement, but some concession of mutual dignity.

The better circumstances of his father were now encouraging the young scholar to further advancement; already some qualities not ordinary to youth of his age were developing. In rhetoric and elocution he was a prodigy; not alone these, there was equilibrium of scholarship and collateral learning—such earnestness of purpose as made Trebonius take him to his heart and bestow upon him extraordinary care.

Upon the records of Erfurt University, 1501, kept then by Jodocus Trutfetter, may be found the name of *Martinus Ludher ex Mansfeld.* Luther signed his own name four various ways—Ludher, Lutter, Lother, and Luther—not an uncommon circumstance then, vagaries of an unestablished language.

In 1502 he was advanced to the dignity of *Baccalaureus Philosophiæ.*

Here at Erfurt he was under the instruction of such men as Gerard Hecker, an Augustine monk, afterward turned Protestant; Arnoldi, a staunch Romanist; John Grevenstein, who declaimed vigorously against the execution of Huss, and John

Bigand, coming after to a life-long friendship with his pupil.

The conventual library at Erfurt was one of the best of its time; the inventions of Guttenberg had now somewhat facilitated the reproduction of books, and some were here; costly volumes then. Here Luther read the most of Cicero, Virgil, and other Latins. He was not a mere pleasure-reader; he read and remembered; read only that which was worth remembering—in fact became so proficient that at twenty he was titled Master of Arts. Something more than the scholastic tongues, however, engaged him; already he had begun to formulate and work out his own language, soon to be invaluable to him as a weapon in the coming warfare. In public exercises, the dexterous way in which he extricated himself from the confusion of dialects commanded the attention of all who listened. This was an innovation, infusion of classics into the native tongue; before him no one had attempted it.

Latin and Greek had been, all along, the scholar's standard; here was coming one who could erect and dignify the language of his own people, make plain illustrious truths to lowly minds, or wrangle with the doctors in the chosen mediums of *belles lettres.*

As a student he was no severe recluse, or jaded

bookworm, but a participator in all the pastimes of his fellows. "A manly exterior, with gentleness of spirit; a boisterous ostentation of vice with real purity of life," says the analyst. No failure of an alternative for the passing hour. Now he was thrumming his guitar, now playing the flute. Music was his delight, a handmaiden that served him well through all that troubled life. "Art of the Prophets," he says, "this and theology can calm the agitations of the soul and put the devil to flight." That rich counter-tenor voice, first raised timidly in the streets of Eisenach, cultivated subsequently, no doubt, by elocutionary training, was yet to be heard in something more effective than choral singing and mountain music.

One of his intimates during student life was Lucas Cranach, ten years his senior, afterwards court painter to three electoral princes, and illustrious in his time. He painted Luther's portrait also, and it is the best we have left to us.

In person young Luther was awkward, carelessly indifferent rather, thinking too much upon other things than grace of person, absorbed even then by greater matters. Stumbling over the road from Erfurt to Mansfeld one Easter holiday, his own dagger by some mischance severed the crural vein; a brother

who accompanied him carried him on his back to Erfurt again, and he lay by till the wound was healed.

Among the Erfurt books Luther was intemperate; wanted to apprehend all, tried to do it, and fell sick in the trying, a victim to the fascination of over-study. He was dispirited; morbid melancholy seized him; a conflict of doubts and misgivings. He had started, urged by parental injunction, on the high road to the law as opening up a more promising future. The conventual library was rich in biblical literature, and he had read it much, and with great delight. Through his restless mind, now in the sick-room, were floating its exalted precepts, its vivid imagery. The story of Hannah and Samuel particularly affected him, growing more beautiful, rose-tinted, to his fevered imagination. There was a touch of youthful romance and sentiment in all this, a gentleness of feeling to which the German scholars of that time were, as a rule, strangers.

These books took wings and flew to his bedside, charming the dull and lonely hour, but leaving him still under the harrow of indecision. One day, in the midst of his despondency, there came to him a kind old priest, unconscious prophet, breathing gentle and encouraging words to the boy of twenty. "Come, my

son, courage now, you shall not die of this sickness. *God has a great destiny in store for you.* He will make a man of you, and you will live to console others in your turn, for God loveth those whom He chastens." Then he went out, little knowing how great a weight these words were to have upon years to come. A journey, and some time spent at home in Mansfeld, succeeded this distressful condition. Convalescence did not, however, remove the uncertainty from his mind; the future looked enormous with responsibilities; the impulse, though youthful, was guiding discreetly, no hasty forward plunge to the duties of maturity. The vast labour of his life was hingeing upon these moments, trying indeed at a time when boyish riot would seem more in keeping; but behind the pleasure-loving boy, behind the mirth and follies of youthful pastimes, stood the serious and contemplative Luther, day by day building the intellectual fortress.

Youthful impatience might have won earlier honours; he was passionate, strong, impetuous, even rash; possessed elements that would have made him great in any walk; might have contracted a marriage not of the plebeian sort, identified himself with the flood of common events, and gone on to distinction and affluence. But he chose the long and weary

road, the one least beaten, least tempting, but sure at last of permanent attainment.

Signs and symbols passed for much in that day; the book of futurity was read in the circling stars and in the eccentricities of nature. Horoscopy, a conveniently pliant art, in which, nevertheless, all had more or less faith, told all the future. These superstitious notions were serviceable to help to continue the people in subjectiveness, but they were destined to follow chivalry to obscurity at last.

Mummery and profound nonsense are not science; Paracelsus was not Galen; astrology was not astronomy; the arts of chicane were growing feeble, but when the strong light of truth as revealed by advancing science was turned on full, common people were supine under the threats and foretellings of these mystic numbers.

Luther himself was watchful of every shifting incident; circumstances pointing this way and that, according to their happenings, confirmed his own mind at last in its leanings and yearnings.

In the year 1505, while walking in a field with a fellow-student, they were overtaken by a thunderstorm; a stroke of lightning prostrated them both, killing the companion outright. Luther, discovering his unconscious fellow, fell on his knees in affrighted

suppliance, as though the heavens themselves commanded him; swore, then and there, a vow to St. Ann that he would renounce all worldly ambitions, abandon every present promise for the future—in short, become a monk.

Thus far was he laid by sentiment; the ideal religious life was triumphant; to his own conviction nothing now remained except the cloister. Within a fortnight Luther made good his vow.

## CHAPTER III.

### NOVITIATE.

PERHAPS Luther hoped to escape the mental torment, which had so beset him, by placing himself beyond old associations, and the lure and incitements of worldly life; it is more probable, however, that he sought seclusion for a closer study of those books which had before now engaged his attention. The books that had absorbed him, and which he had tried to absorb during university life, were some fragments of the Bible, and the "Explanations of the Psalms" and "Spirit of the Letter" by St. Augustine. These in reality were the first that sent him adrift from his original purposes. He had read Biel and Andilly, Occam, Scotus, and Gerson also; was far beyond most men of maturer years in scholarly quality; no empiric either; book factories had not yet made accessible the learning of learned men, nor the folly of foolish ones.

William of Occam, or Ockham, whom Luther especially admired, was an English disciple of Scotus, who stoutly and eloquently maintained the superiority of individual judgment over prevailing dogmata. His principles fitted well the inclination of Luther's mind. In France, Occam boldy upheld the National Government in its struggle against Papal usurpation. Not from revolutionary motives, but hoping thereby to assure to common opinion the rights of acknowledgment at the bar of the hierarch. To think differently from the prescribed order then was worse than scepticism; free will was heresy. "Have we not all the books, all the traditions?" says Rome. "Who, then, shall dare to differ from our interpretation?" Occam's principles of logic, contained in his "Questions and Decisions," engrafted themselves upon Luther's mind.

This was among a score or two of books which constituted the conventual library, but these were enough to quicken the ardour of the young student. Art, music, mechanics, were nothing compared with the majestic possibilities of learning and letters. Luther may have seen and read the whole Bible before his voluntary imprisonment; at any rate he saw it soon after, and then commenced those years of serious and effective study.

The evening of July 17, 1505, he passed in a

convivial way, in company with his fellow-students; music and mirth made glad the hour, and no one there knew that this was to be the epilogue to his merriment. Henceforth the sober and earnest man takes the place of the rollicking boy. Midnight finds him not in his accustomed place; in this hour of silence and solitude the doors of the Augustine monastery of Erfurt have closed behind him, him and his Virgil and Plautus, two books which might be all the solace of prospective years.

Luther's first business after entering the convent was to inform his father.

Consider the chagrin of John Luther, town councillor of Mansfield, when he hears of this performance; he who has sweated and prayed for and confirmed the prosperous future of this favourite son, who had dreamed of him as sitting with the ermine, bearing a state title, either of civic or military significance. The birchen rod must be laid by now, the discipline and precept of past years could avail nothing. All these anxious hopeful years have gone for nought; his expectant chancellor turned priest—worse, turned hermit. These were slow post-coach days, though, and John Luther was spared the immediate knowledge of his son's resolve. When it did reach him, however, he took it seriously; like other fathers,

could not realise that his son was growing away from him and his counsels. This was burial in life; "*In vita semi-mortua*," Melancthon has it. Even the faithful and pious of that day, though they respected the monk, and contributed to his small store, yet tarried long to consider before entering the door of the convent.

On the part of John Luther, haste would avail nothing now; there was the month of sequestration, during which Martin would be beyond quest and sight of the world, already well advanced.

Once inside the walls, Martin Luther, true to his inspirations, assumed the name of Augustine. His consecration was not a mere act alone, it was a thorough and entire surrender of self. Witness again his sincerity in the name which he assumes. There was a savour of sentimentalism, however, in this sudden assumption. See it in his love and constant reading of St. Augustine, his admiration for a very pure, noble, and resolute character, and the final assumption of his name, which, however, failed to adhere to him.

Few men of his time were better calculated than Martin Luther to imitate these qualities and react this character. Easy enough to play a part that has some villainy in it; but where all is excellence, purity,

and gentleness, it is not so readily adopted. This out of sight altogether, the scholarly affinity alone would have exalted the young disciple. The gown and ring pertaining to his Mastership of Arts he sent back to the University, where they were greeted with surprise and sorrow. This was a formal notification of his resolve.

Among his fellows Luther had stood foremost, not only in scholarship, but in the more intimate relations of social life. To him they all looked up, and their eyes had hoped to follow him still upward to further eminence and honour. Were all these hopes now destined to disappointment? So many men had gone to oblivion in the cloister; so many promising lives had been submerged in this sea of mediocrity, that it seemed to them in its best aspect a hazardous step; they lost no time in urging his renunciation.

Martin's letter to his father rehearsed to him the scene during the thunder-storm, reinforcing it doubtless with all the rhetoric at his command, to convince him that he was really called of Heaven.

"God grant," replied the sorrowing and angry father, "that you may not have mistaken the delusion of the devil *(Teufliche Gespensterei)* for a sign from Heaven."

John Luther's anger was not soon cooled. For many a year it threatened a permanent rupture between father and son. Persistency on the part of one, patience on the part of the other, with patience ultimately triumphant.

Luther's novitiate was anything but serene. Other responsibilities than those of high and holy office came upon him. What he looked for and yearned for was study, interrupted only by recreative meditation; but this was not what he found. "If good and pure men," he reasoned to himself, "like Augustine, Scotus, and Occam, could here read and study, erect philosophies, become profound, why may not I, with even greater advantages than they of olden time?"

The egotism of a young scholar and pride of intellect may, too, have reflected in his bearing toward those about him. At any rate, the elders got their heads together, and concluded that this youth must be humiliated.

"By-and-by he will know more than all of us put together; our traditional dignity will be departed. This love of books is sinful, elevates too much the individual mind when it should sit prostrate, meekly submissive to the high dispensations of our superiors." So reasoned the venerable monks. Luther was doomed to become a scullion and drudge, a high-

way beggar, going back to his first estate, *Saccum per Neccum*, after these years of careful and laborious study, now swinging a besom, now winding the convent clock, going from house to house with the tribute-bag, or, like a pack mule, bearing burdens to and from the convent. "This is mortification; this will break that spirit of self-importance," say the pious and reverend elders.

Two patient years Luther laboured with his father, trying to reconcile him; continuing all this time in degrading service, lamenting the duties forced upon him by these sportulary monks.

Year 1507, his father agreed to be present at his ordination; further objection he had abandoned. The son was growing older, judging for himself, and the father knew well, through all his life, the passionate intensity of his purposes. So with doubt and fear and much sorrow, John Luther journeyed toward Erfurt, and there saw the black robe fall upon his beloved son; would rather, perhaps, have seen the pall upon his coffin. Then were there no further anxieties, no hopes growing to be crushed.

At the altar Martin Luther was seized with a sudden fear, not timidity, but an overwhelming consciousness of the sacredness of his vows, uncertainty as to his fitness; he turned indeed to escape, but

those about him detained him, and the ceremony was soon over.

At the dinner which followed, John sat by his son, but the father's lips did not open with congratulations; not a word of cheer; a burning disappointment crushed every pleasure. "Why are you so sad, dear father?" asked Martin; "why regret this monk's robe? Is it not becoming to me?"

John Luther looked silently his son up and down, then rising from his side, inquired of the company, "Is it not written in the Word that a man should honour his father and mother?"—turned and looked Martin again in the face silently—embarrassing silence broken only by the general response, "It is." "Pray Heaven, then," exclaimed John, "that this be not a snare of the devil. Let us drink." Then dropping twenty florins into the hands of his son, he hurried from the scene of his disappointment. Twenty florins was much money in that day, and there is a touching kindliness in this last act, though no kindly word went with it.

## CHAPTER IV.

### EARLY TOILS AND HONOURS.

CONFINEMENT had already begun to tell upon the vigour of the young student; close and constant application to study, coupled with meagre diet and uncomfortable surroundings, were wearing upon a hitherto robust frame. Yet study was even then promising its fruits. Reputation awaited the Erfurt student. Cloister and convent walls could neither hide nor hold the expanding character. The world saw nothing but the man in prison; it had not yet discerned that more exalted part of him that rose superior to circumstances, and went forth free and unencumbered.

In 1508, six years after its establishment, Luther was called to the professorship of philosophy in Wittenberg University.[1]

[1] Established by Frederick, Elector of Saxony, 1502.

In those days universities were tribunals for the decision of all questions of science and letters. It was the Elector's ambition that Wittenberg should rise to this standard, and he declared in its charter that he, as well as the neighbouring princes, "would repair thither as to an oracle, so that when we have come full of doubt, we may, after receiving sentence, depart in certainty."

The honours and responsibility of a professorship were not light matters. Luther, though not unknown to the public, was now to be thrust into eminence. All Europe heard of the learned professor, and many came to sit under his teaching.

Previous to this, however, he had made the familiar acquaintance of Dr. Staupitz, vicar-general of Erfurt convent, a worthy and estimable man, full of faith and kindly sympathy. He beheld the degrading services which were thrown upon the earnest scholar, put a stop to them, and reprimanded his persecutors. Luther, depressed, sorrowful, and oppressed, appealing to the vicar, met with a gentle, even affectionate response. In his own words he says, "When I was young it happened that I, in my priest habit, was taking part in a procession on Corpus Christi day at Eisleben. Suddenly the sight of the Holy Sacrament, borne by Dr. Staupitz, so terrified me, that I

perspired at every pore, and thought I should die of fear." Immediately after the ceremony he confessed to the doctor; told him of his fear and weaknesses; told him how he trembled at the sight of the Sacrament.

"Thy thoughts," replied the kindly vicar, "are not according to Christ; Christ does not terrify, He consoles." Revelation, indeed, denies terrorism. Even with all his Bible-reading, he could not release himself from the vision of an austere Omnipotence. Hereditary tradition, birchen rod, fist-law—these were his similes for the ruling power.

Ceaselessly he cried, "Oh, my sins, my sins." "But," says Dr. Staupitz, "you would fain be without sin; no right sin is in you, such as murder, adultery, blasphemy. Keep a record of right sins; trouble yourself less about small matters; Christ came hither for the pardon of our sins." Luther could not accept this counsel, but went on praying night and day, all night and all day, until one morning he was found prone upon the floor of his cell, nearly dead. One of the monks, acquainted with his temperament, and perhaps more gentle than the rest, took up his flute and played a familiar air, while Luther slowly revived.

Important factor, this Wittenberg University, in

future events! Like its founder, it inclined to the exercise of free will, as did nearly all the universities not devoted to the inculcation of dogma. Propaganda had so far succeeded over the schools; no place there for poetry and wit; nothing but church polity, church maxims, church worship.

Conrad Muth, canon of Gotha—"*In glücklichen ruhe*," "in blessed tranquillity," as he wrote over the door of his house—thought otherwise. Oracle of his time, he became the patron of young men seized with poetic ecstasy, showed roads to learning other than those of a polemical kind, introduced them to poets of all orders, and doubtless helped to make many writers of bad verses. Hierarchy molested him and all other teachers of his kind. Nevertheless the system grew in favour, and Wittenberg was one of the universities that adopted it.

Unscholastic minds were made acquainted with the Homeric poems through the translations of Erasmus, which, with his grammars and dictionaries, let in a flood of new light. Such convergent influences as these tended more than anything else to nationalise and make great Germany.

Frederick, when he established Wittenberg school, though far-sighted enough to give it this tendency, knew not how vastly he had augmented it when he

called Martin Luther as its philosophic teacher. University tradition was drawn entirely from the ancient institution of Paris. "Stay by this," argued the German, "and there is no such thing as progress;" so they departed from it, dropped the curriculum, now nearly four hundred years old, and moved cautiously to another plane, not without trouble, however, for there was much burning of books and many harsh words.

Vicar-General John Staupitz had taken the full measure of Luther, and knew well the material of the man. Of Staupitz the books say little, but he was notable in his time. To piety he added learning and efficiency; not the common zeal known to ardent church people, but a thorough comprehension of necessities and broad administrative faculties. Far-sighted enough he was to anticipate an impending collision between the body politic and the body religious, shaping his course accordingly, influenced some by the Elector, but in the main subject to the superior power. However this may be, when the crisis comes we shall see which way the advocacy of Thuringia turns; see also if Wittenberg be not the next Jerusalem.

## CHAPTER V.

### MEDITATIONS AND ANXIETIES.

LUTHER'S mental disease, so we may call it, was one not uncommon to scholars. He was oppressed, not by the burden of what he knew, but by the vastness of that to be known. Earnestly labouring to distinguish truth from untruth, the real from the false, he saw how small a part of real excellence was the mere act of devotion. Ideal religion afforded him little satisfaction. A personal responsibility confronted him, no matter how strongly the canons urged that all power was vicarated, and a monk's robe was only another lion's skin if it did not fall upon shoulders worthy of it.

"When I was in the monastery at Erfurt," writes Luther, "a preaching friar and a barefoot friar wandered together into the country to beg for the brethren and gather alms. These two played upon each other in their sermons. The barefoot friar,

preaching first, said, 'Loving country people and good friends, take heed of that bird, the swallow, for he is white within but upon the back it is black; it is an evil bird, always chirping but profitable for nothing; and when angry is altogether mad,' hereby describing the preaching friar, who wore on the outside a black coat, and underneath it white linen.

"Now in the evening the preaching friar came into the pulpit and played upon the barefoot friar. 'Indeed, loving friends, I know him, nor can well defend the swallow, but the grey sparrow is a far worse and more hurtful bird than the swallow, for it bites the kine and blinds people's eyes, as ye may learn in the book of Tobit. He robs, steals, and devours all he can get, as oats, barley, and all other eatable things. Moreover, he is a lascivious bird; his great art is to cry, Scrip! scrip!' The barefoot friar might, in better colours, have painted the preaching friars, the other birds, buzzards and right epicureans, while the barefoot friars, under the cloak of sanctity and humility, are more proud and haughty than kings or princes, and most of them have imagined and devised monstrous lies."[1]

In another place Luther says, "In Italy was a

[1] Hazlitt's translation.

particular order of friars, called *Fratres Ignorantiæ*, that is, 'Brethren of Ignorance,' who took a solemn oath that they would neither know, learn, nor understand anything at all, but answer all questions with '*nescio*.' Truly all friars are well worthy of this title, for they only read and babble out the words, but regard not their meaning. The Pope and the cardinals think, 'Should these brethren study and be learned, they would master us,' therefore *saccum per neccum*—that is, 'hang a bag about their necks, and send them to beg through city, town, and country.'"

Luther was convinced of a greater and better eminence for the monk. He himself was the best example of a disbeliever in hereditary faith that the world ever had; so was he the best example of the sincere Catholic, St. Augustine. "We get our instructions from the supreme Pontiff at Rome," said the Erfurt monks, when Luther was absorbed by his books; "no need of these books; why waste time in study when you might be enjoying yourself?"

Luther looked higher. The foundation of his religion was an intelligent knowledge of its import; going beyond thesis and dogma, it went to the root of it. Prescribed penances were of small account to him.

At Wittenberg that oratorical faculty, which had before distinguished him, rose to its sublimest pro-

portions; strong, rich voice, remarkable rhetoric, better than all, unaffected sincerity, put him forward at once as the first orator of his land and time. Still a monk, he took quarters at the Augustine Convent in Wittenberg, alternately teaching and preaching in the monastery, in the royal chapel, and in the college church; these with his study leaving no abundant leisure. Still was he given to morbid melancholy and solitude.

One day, studying his Bible, his eyes fell upon the passage, "The just shall live by faith." Alone it was incomprehensible. *Justitia Dei revelatur in illo*—these first words involved a perplexity of terror. Defined in their narrower meaning, and without collateral significance, even now they carry an impression of austerity; so Luther read them in his Bible. He turned to the friendly commentary of St. Augustine, read it, and made a note, "Then was I glad, for I learned and saw that God's righteousness was His mercy, by which He accounts and holds us justified; thus I reconciled justice with justification and felt assured that I was in the true faith. It seemed to me as though Heaven's gate stood fully open and I was entering therein." Not strange is it that he came to think theology "the mistress of the world, the queen of the arts."

Lecturing at the university was not like preaching to the shepherds in the Erfurt hills. Here was serious business; men with heads as well as hearts listened. One way or another he was leading them, and the intense consciousness of his obligations weighed heavily. Nevertheless, the mind destined to gild the age in which it lived was gradually expanding, only just now moving to its fit province.

Few men got so many honours as came to Luther in the first five-and-twenty years of his life. Already his name was well known in every city of letters and learning. Aversion to the duty he was performing did not paralyse the efficiency of his work. If the world thought this his single object and vocation, it was mistaken, for in the midst of assiduous labours he was preparing himself in other directions. The course of his life was not yet truly set; but in his own mind he had found "the kernel of the nut, the heart of the wheat," in theological study. Tauler's sermons confirmed him in the aspiration for the degree of Doctor of Theology.[1]

The philosophy of Aristotle had become abomin-

[1] John Tauler, mystic, born at Strasburg, 1290, joined the order of Dominicans, studied theology in Paris, and gained great reputation as a preacher and Reformer of his church, also effected many changes in the German language; died 1361. He was in truth the first Reformer.

able to him; this abomination nearly crowded him out of his chair in the University. He could not honestly profess it. Its inception was wrong, and he halted at the prospect of becoming its exponent. "You would kill me," said he in conversation with Dr. Staupitz; "I shall not be able to carry it three months." "Then you die in the service of your Lord and Master," replied the vicar. Luther yielded to wise and excellent counsel. After he had assumed his position, some one inquiring concerning his health got the response: "I am well, thank God, but should be better if I did not have to profess this philosophy."

However vehemently he may have disavowed the Aristotelian system at this time, it had evidently taken strong hold of him. His table-talk (not always to be relied on, some suspicion of gratuitous emendation by other hands there) frequently turned upon it with severe comment. "Aristotle, the heathen, the epicurean Aristotle," he calls him; yet his whole life, manner of life and logic, was founded on these same principles. The only difference between the two was a distance of fifteen centuries, and the advance of a new religion. What Aristotle drew from remoteness and reason only, Luther found in his Bible.

Perfect virtue and supreme intelligence belong to the God of Aristotle as well as the God of the Bible,

but one is the evolution of philosophy, the other a revealed fact conforming in the main to the deductions of a mind labouring with scholar's tools only. What one drew from universal nature the other drew from the light of record; in the analysis both had used the same tools. Every obscure passage, every word with a complex or double meaning, is extracted from chaos, made clear and satisfactory to himself by no borrowed commentary, but by lucid, erudite logic, untrimmed by prejudice, untrammelled by tradition; developing strangely under an intelligence sharpened by long and faithful study.

There was a time when Luther knew as little of the Bible as Aristotle. He had heard of the book and read some of it, but so fragmentary was this knowledge that it afforded him no premise, no idea from which to expand.

The now great Luther was only a pigmy compared with the Luther to come, when his piety had grown equally profound with his philosophy.

Luther had often read to Staupitz from the Bible which he had found in Erfurt monastery. Staupitz was a willing listener, faithful indeed now towards his order and the pontifical head of his church, but having the elements of reform strong within him. So liberal and outspoken was the vicar, that it came

to the ears of the Pope, already somewhat perplexed by the attitude of his German following—kept busy, in fact, patching up and conciliating this whole territory.

The clergy, as a rule, were deplorably ignorant. Not necessary for them to know anything except the laws and usages of the Church. Their prayers were Latinised German of such a sad mixture that sense could not be made of them. On the subject of the Passion a monk preached for two hours after this manner—"Whether quality is in reality distinct from substance. My head may pass through this hole, but the bigness of my head cannot pass through it."

Luther had been two years engaged at university duties, when Staupitz came into collision with some of the convents of his order; so serious a difference arose that some one must go to Rome to explain matters—get them righted, if possible. Naturally enough, Staupitz selected for this delicate office his close and well-qualified friend, Luther.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE JOURNEY TO ROME.

THUS far we have beheld nothing but the simple-minded rustic youth, grown out of nature, educated in the conventual schools, with a small circumference of observation and limited experience; a bibliophile of his time, if you like, with much more than ordinary capacity, however, reading not always to accept, but to accept from, enlarge upon, and correct.

Hitherto the German scholars had been, for the most part, faithful disciples, but here was one without precedent, the initiator of an epoch, the founder of new principles; but no one knew, no one prophesied the greatness and dignity of the structure which should rise upon these.

All through this period of Luther's life you may plainly discern the influence of John Tauler's sermons, weak it may be at first, but growing to a comprehensible reality afterward. You can trace to

them directly those influences on the common mind of Germany which afterward assumed such vastness, yet so obscure and so remote was their source that history has not, in any degree, accorded them their full measure of importance.

Jodocus Trutfetter, of Eisenach, Luther's old tutor, was now a great sustainer of established opinion. Subsequent events diminished his importance, not for want of scholastic ability, but because he went astray from popular inclination. He was no mean adversary, an oracle of his time rather, and his opinions were much respected, if not altogether adhered to. He characterised the teachings of Luther and Staupitz as heretical, rebellious; and, bringing to his side of the debate seven conventual establishments, made a breach so wide that nothing but papal intercession could bridge it over.

That was what sent Luther on his long and decisive journey to Rome; that, too, terminated the boyhood, the childish simplicity of the great man of the future. Every day is now to add its empirical influence. A simple, sweet, and pious nature, accustomed only to the pabulum of books and meditative inspiration, nearly or quite ignorant of the alluring factors of the world, will now have thrust upon it some unrecorded, unsavoury truths.

A journey to Rome in those days was a veritable pilgrimage, beset with difficulties and dangers. As was then common, Luther set out on foot as a mendicant friar, accompanied by a brother monk, full of hope, and rejoicing at the prospect of seeing with his own eyes a city clothed with such honours and dignity. Sacred place, indeed, where saints and martyrs slept, and where holy men did watch and pray continually. His resting-places, like those of nearly all travellers of that time, were such as he found along the road, generally at the convents of his order.

Though many of the German cities through which he travelled were larger in population than at present, the greater part of his journey was through a wild and woody country, jealously watched by the barons from their hill-top castles.

The date of this journey is lodged in uncertainty; antiquarians have disputed between 1510 and 1511. Chronology here, however, is unimportant, judging from the meagre record which is left of this toilsome episode. Luther himself only notes those experiences which were foreign to his own, saying little in regard to his pains.

Simple-minded Germany was full of fabulous stories concerning the power and splendour of Italy.

Something more than reverential awe inspired these; it was superstitious dread of supposed supernatural endowments. "The Italians only require you to look into a mirror to be able to kill you; they can deprive you of all your senses by secret poisons. In Italy the air itself is pestilential.[1] At night they close, hermetically seal every window, and stop every chink and cranny." All this was poured into Luther's ears in the course of his journey; even he, with all his learning, had imbibed largely of the superstitions of his native land. Frequently, in his own records, he speaks gravely of witches, magic, and mysterious performances as though they were serious facts. The soberness with which he discourses concerning some of his conferences with evil spirits is amusing. If we are to believe him, a legion of devils was at his heels continually, and neither rhetoric nor invective succeeded in dispersing them.

Imagine him now, after many perplexities, footsore and weary, standing upon the southern slope of the Alps; below and before him the Italy of his expectations, ever beautiful land of the cerulean sky and plenteous verdure; rapture and reverence doubtless filled his spirit as he breathed what he believed to be

[1] This undoubtedly alludes to the miasma then much more prevalent and fatal in Rome than at present.

the very fragrance of piety and devotion in this atmosphere of the saints.

At the Milan convent he was hospitably received; the first introduction this to social Italy. There, in his own brotherhood, instead of dark and dubious cloisters, coarse and scanty fare, he finds palatial halls, rich in all that art and human labour could bestow. The young German stood aghast, for here was a mighty contrast with the severer Saxon convents he had known. More contrast when, on Friday, he beheld their tables laden with meat and wine. The blunt Saxon spoke his mind about it, took them to task so emphatically that his hosts took umbrage, and he was invited not to stay, and left forthwith, but not before he had found that brothers of his order lived by other things than faith.[1]

Still hopeful, but resolute, he pursues his way. At Pavia he is worn out and takes to his bed, having previously left his companion ill at Bologna. Fervid heat, fatigue, and unwholesome water had overcome them both. Again melancholy seizes him; the vision of death in a foreign land rises like a spectre before

[1] "For one day's fasting there are three of feasting. Every friar has for his supper two quarts of beer, a quart of wine, and spice cakes, or bread prepared with spice and salt. Thus go on these poor fasting brethren."—*Table-talk.*

him, but in the midst of his hallucinations, his lips, moving almost unconsciously, repeat the words, those old words which had so long been the source of his anxiety, "The just shall live by faith."

A course of diet of pomegranates relieved the travellers, and in a few days they were again journeying. Hastening to make up for lost time, they passed through Florence without stopping, in order, if possible, to be at Rome before St. John's day, having in mind the ancient Roman proverb, "Happy the mother whose child shall celebrate mass in Rome on St. John's day eve."

"Oh, how I desired," says Luther, "to give my mother this happiness; but it was impossible, and vexed me greatly." They arrived too late.

Before the Porto del Popolo, Luther fell on his knees, exclaiming, "Hail, holy Rome; made holy by the holy martyrs and the blood which has been spilled there."

Remain there, outside the gate, reverend and sincere man, if you would hold to these opinions; dangerous place within for simple, trustful piety. All the splendour of the world past and wealth present has culminated here. Glorious era this for art, which here has grown out of crude antiquity, exalting itself and becoming more exalted under the

immortal genius of a Raphael and a Michael Angelo. Marvels of stone and wood were growing above and beside the ruinous remnants of other grandeur. Rome of the Christian sixteenth century has striven to outdo the polytheistic Rome of the past—has made herself rotten in the doing of it. The tribute money of many faithful nations has rolled up and crystallised on the banks of the Tiber. Julius II., now upon the Papal throne, "rising," says the chronicler, "like the Neptune of Virgil," prudent and peace-inspiring, from the sea of licentiousness and villainy which swashed and surged about the Borgian court; far enough removed yet from a genuine morality. With all his good qualities, Julius was unequal to the task of entire reconstruction; no one man could live long enough or work hard enough to clean all the dirt from these Augean stables. Display and prodigal expenditure went on apace. War succeeded the entanglements of corruption, and the Pope became a conqueror instead of a pacificator. The dagger and murderous philters still played their part, even in the Borgo; the miasma of intrigue, worse than that exhaled by the silent pools, still spread its unwholesome influences. Veneration for the Holy See was nearly lost, and formal religion in great part turned to blasphemy.

Lutner now, impelled by genuine enthusiasm, hastened without delay to behold with his own eyes the prodigious works of the city, now standing before the half-completed St. Peter's, now contemplating the splendid relics of an age gone by. He devoted himself to penances, ascending the "Scala Santa," all the time feeling in his heart the promptings to a more intelligent piety. Again the words, "The just shall live by faith," rung, even thundered in his ears. He saw here in Rome that piety which was a mere habiliment, to be put on or off. In the convent where he visited they smiled at the simple faith of this German pilgrim, winking at his sober sincerity, and making light of his erudition. The convents here in Rome differed vastly from those he had been familiar with in his own land. Here three or four monks only made up a household. These were palaces, indeed, with royal revenues. Far away in those Thuringian hills, plain, sombre walls sheltered twelve or fifteen ill-fed, poorly-clothed brethren.

When he said mass in the church, adopting the serious emphasis of his own country, the priests at his elbow hurried him along, could say it seven times over while he was not yet finished. While blessing the sacrament one day, a monk whispered to him,

"Quick, quick, send our lady her son back speedily; what use of being so deliberate?"

At another time he corrected a young monk for reading *munsimus* in place of *sumpsimus.* "Mind thine own business," retorted the monk; "we have already read *munsimus,* and we are not going to change our reading for thee."

Luther was deeply pained by the loose principles and worse than loose practices of his brethren. He says, "The papists have a fair and glittering external worship, and boast much of God's work, of faith, of Christ and the Sacrament, of love and hope; but they utterly deny the power and virtue of all these, nay, teach that which is quite contrary thereto."

The prescribed language of the litany was transposed, made meaningless, or to convey ideas contrary to its intent; these celebrants juggled with things sacred. "*Panis es, panis manebis,*" said one of these jugglers, holding the bread before him; then elevated the host, while all the people bowed devoutly and said Amen. Poor ignorant people, slaves to tradition, superstitious dread, and a tyrannical church!

At one time during his visit he was present during a disputation before the Pope, in which thirty learned doctors were engaged. The Pope had boasted that with his right hand he commanded the angels of

Heaven, with his left hand he drew souls out of Purgatory, and that his person was mingled with that of the Godhead. Calixtus, who argued against this assumption, was obliged at last to yield, surrendered entirely, as was always a matter of necessary courtesy toward the Holy Father.

The treatment of Luther while in Rome was anything but cordial and kindly; instead of Christian brotherhood, warm and generous sympathy, he met nothing but repulse and coldness; their creed, their piety, was only ceremonial, and brief at that.

Italy had risen to such a panoply of splendour that she looked with contempt upon the plain German brother. "They are wanting in culture, in the arts they are nothing, in the sciences they are babes," said the critical Roman. True enough, but even then, German pence were helping to lay the stones of St. Peter's; even then, German soldiers stood to the death for the faith they professed.

Luther saw nothing here pre-eminent but art; himself a lover of the arts, this he could not fail to notice. Titian was in the meridian of his triumphs. Many rooms of the pontifical palace had been painted by Perugino, Sodoma, and others. Raphael himself was engaged in completing the work; painting even now, perhaps, his famous "Reconciliation of philo-

sophy and astrology with theology." Julius was the noble patron of Raphael, and his friend, Bramante, the first architect of St. Peter's.

Rome was intoxicated by her increasing splendour; fat with money got by various devices from various lands; made pompous by the sycophantic obeisance of many nobles. "The covetousness of the Pope," says Luther, "exceeded all others, for the devil made choice of Rome as his peculiar habitation. The ancients said, 'Rome is a den of covetousness, a root of all wickedness.' I have also read in a very old book these words following:—'*Versus amor, mundi caput est et bestia terrae.*' That is, where the word *amor* is turned backward it reads Roma. 'The head of the world, the beast that devours all lands.' At Rome all is raked to the hands of the prelates without preaching or church service; the poor ignorant laity being deluded, through superstition and idolatry, to purchase their services for money. I am persuaded a man cannot know the disease of covetousness unless he know Rome, for deceits and jugglings in other parts are nothing in comparison to those of Rome."

Luther remained at Rome only a fortnight; he saw, heard, studied carefully, and thought much. Bold and strong as the Jupiter of Michael Angelo

were the impressions which he got there and carried with him to the end of his days.

When he went once more out at the gate, with his face turned northward toward Germany, toward Wittenberg and home, no one dreamed, no one in the mighty city gave even a passing thought to the future of this plain friar, soon to shake the throne which had for centuries dictated to kings and princes.

Evidently Rome did not weigh well—did not appreciate the power of her Saxon allies; the rare and substantial virtues of the German would not be flattered, cajoled, or mollified by the chicanery of Rome. The light and frivolous employments of Italy did not fit well here in the north country. Zither and castanet could not charm away the ingrained manhood, heroic manhood inherited through centuries. Children of Kaiser Frederick and the helmeted Markgraves, with their traditions of valour and heroism, were not now meekly to accept the dictation of any imperator but one of their own choice; "Hands, hearts, and heads must be free," they say. "Let us look seriously into matters, and meanwhile we will retain four-fifths of the Episcopal fund collected here, until we have better knowledge as to the use of our money in Rome."

## CHAPTER VII.

### WITTENBERG AND ITS MOTIVE.

YEAR 1512, Luther is again in Wittenberg; returned there, not a meek and submissive pilgrim to rehearse the praises of Rome, but full of indignation, which he does not hesitate to express. "I would not," he says, "have missed seeing Rome for a hundred thousand florins; I feel justified now in many statements that I have made; fears which I entertained are more than strengthened; there are bad doings in Rome."

Luther brought with him from Rome a little picture, a satire upon the Pope, if you please. The Church was there represented as a ship almost filled with friars, monks, and priests, who were casting out lines to those that were behind in the sea. The Pope, with his cardinals and bishops, sat at the helm of this ship, overshadowed and covered by the Holy Ghost, who was looking toward heaven. Luther's strictures upon this representation were severe enough. It made for him the text of a dis-

course which startled his hearers and set intelligent men to thinking.

He did not immediately assume his duties in the University, but, to allow Dr. Staupitz a period of rest, took upon him the duties of vicar-general, and set about improving the condition of the monasteries in his charge. It was serious business, for the budget of complaints, dissensions, and demands was a large one, and the differences before existing had set them all pulling in different directions, and had put Staupitz to his wits also. This was partly caused by Staupitz's acceptance of the principles of theology laid down by Tauler and reinforced by the publication of "A Book of German Theology." Nothing new about this book, however; its principles found their inception as far back as the ninth century. That they had vital strength their long existence is sufficient evidence. Hitherto the schools had been despotic in their opposition to mysticism. Reason enough for this state of things; mysticism in that time was indirectly threatening the nominal head of the Church. "What an age!" exclaims Hutten, rejoicing in the light of a new dawning day; "learning flourishes, the minds of men are awakening, it is joy to be alive." In other words, now we shall have forensic battles, a war of letters, a tumult of learning; men will begin to think for themselves, and, so thinking, will act.

If Luther was a man of severity and strong

impulses, liable to explode at any moment with invective and irony, he also possessed in a large degree the diplomatic quality—policy, some call it. In a battle of words it was a foregone conclusion that he surely was to be the winner. No man of his time had such ready command of language or used it more effectively. You must not judge the man Luther, wielding his German and Latin, by the man Luther translated into English prose; what sounds well and fits handsomely and easily in one is coarse and vulgar in the other. The expression of German thought in his time was couched in undebatable words. Inherent and long-continued love of truth demanded nothing equivocal.

In the course of a long epistolary controversy with Michael Dressel, prior of the Nieustadt monastery, in which he requested, in fact demanded him to surrender his post, Luther mixed sentimentality, piety, humour, and an amusing account of his occupations, not forgetting, however, to be severely imperative in his demands upon the prior.

In the prosecution of his liberal designs Luther had one opponent more formidable than any who came after; he stood fairly and effectually in the way of the Wittenberg professor, until death removed him in 1513. Jodocus Trutfetter was the last faithful adherent of Papal dictation in Germany who had influence and learning enough to combat the energy

and determination of Luther. So long as he lived, Trutfetter kept on him the fetters of liberalism; old age and dissolution alone conquered him. Had he been of equal years with Luther, the progress of events might have been delayed, even transferred to another generation.

Soon after Luther's return, the prospects of Wittenberg were seriously impaired by the appearance of epidemic small-pox in the town. The inhabitants, fleeing in terror, urged Luther to go with them.

"Fly?" he replied. "My God, no! The world will not perish for one monk. Here is my duty, and here will I remain. Conscience bids me, and until conscience bids otherwise, so will I do. Not that I have no fear of death; I am not the Apostle Paul; but the Lord will deliver me from fear." And when the affliction had passed, the refugees returned again only to find Luther at his post.

October 16th, 1512, Luther had conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity,[1] and on the day following he was invested with the official insignia by Andrew Bodenstein,[2] of Carlstadt.

[1] The degrees of Doctor of Divinity were at this time of two orders, Dr. Biblicus and Dr. Sententiarius. The former was the one bestowed upon Luther.

[2] Then Dean of the theological faculty of Wittenberg, but later on far from friendly to the young doctor and his projects.

The charges of this ceremony, much beyond the capacity of Luther's purse, were advanced by the Elector, now become an unequivocal friend and powerful advocate of the young theologian. "Another Scipio," Luther calls him, "able to govern and overcome himself and to curb his mind, a high and most laudable victory." This assumption by Luther of the exalted theological honours was the outgrowth of no ambition for personal distinction. The work of his whole life had been leading up to it. He was emphatically a Bible student, accepting its cardinal principles for the government of himself and his teaching. "The study of theology is despised among us, and the gospel of Christ, as well as the excellent writings of the Holy Fathers, are completely neglected; faith, piety, moderation, and all the virtues so much praised and valued by even the pagans themselves, the wonders of God's grace and the merits of Jesus, all these are doctrines upon which the most profound silence is maintained by them. And such people too, who understand nothing of either theology or philosophy, are elevated to the highest dignities of the Church, and become the guardians of our souls. A melancholy decline of the Christian Church; hatred towards the clergy, and the total absence of all good and salutary instruction; the profligate life led by the ecclesiastics; these all shake the faith of well-minded parents, and

prevent them from allowing their sons to devote their lives to that once holy service. The priests omit entirely the searching of the Holy Scripture; they corrupt their taste to such an extent that they no longer feel its beauty and force; they become lukewarm and lazy in their duties, and are only too glad when the service is speedily ended, chant and sermon hurriedly concluded, and their presence no longer required! They discourse more gravely and impressively with a mortal upon whom they may have a claim for money than with their Divine Master and Creator; instead of devoting their leisure time to study, they bestow it in gambling, debauchery, and licentiousness, without caring in the least or having any consideration for the disgust their conduct everywhere produces. How then is it possible that in this shameful state of things the laity can feel respect for them or religion itself?"

Witnesses to and upholders of this bold assertion were not wanting. Christopher Stadium, good Bishop of Augsburg, in a synodical charge to his clergy, rehearsed this complaint; took his people to task for vices destructive alike to the Church and the people. Hugo, Bishop of Constantine, though bitterly opposed to the doctrines of Luther, coincided with this arraignment of the abuses of the Church. Indeed the sober scholastic mind of all Germany was commonly in accord with it.

Of the leading members of the clerical body of the Swiss Confederation in this sixteenth century, there were not three who had ever read the Bible. A letter from Zurich to the people of Valois, written about this time, quoted a Bible passage, but only one man was found there who knew the book, and he only by hearsay.

Need enough then that sincere and strong men like Luther should emphasise this department in theology. Some theology there was apart from the mandatorial utterances of Rome. Luther was now in a position to speak with more authority than before; his word sounded further, sunk deeper, thanks to gentle George Spalatin, who we may suspect urged upon the Elector Luther's fitness for the exalted position; not much urging necessary, perhaps, for no man in the province was more sensible of Luther's piety than the Elector himself.

When Leo X. came to the papal chair he found much business on his hands. His predecessor had already rifled the coffers of the treasury, and pretty thoroughly mulcted every province subject to the Church. There were bills unpaid, great edifices uncompleted, contracts not yet matured, besides ambitious designs of his own to prosecute. He wanted to leave some monument as grand as any yet projected. Italian taste had grown so dilettante that nothing but incomparable ornament could satisfy

it; all the genius of the nation was hired to gratify this ambition. In their choice of the æsthetic they had gone wide from devoutness and reverence—"from virtue to vertu," says Carlyle—and were paying vastly more to gratify carnality than they were to advance the religion over which they dominated.

The money which made Rome once more splendid disintegrated the Christian Church, paralysed its power for good. Some ingenious invention must now be resorted to in order to replenish the treasury. Ximenes had flatly refused to loan from the Spanish exchequer funds to be wasted at Rome; he forced the papal collectors to take an oath that they would forward no funds or bills of exchange thither. France was more liberal, and advanced one hundred thousand livres, for which Leo bonded one-tenth of a prospective contribution; this money was for the ostensible service of putting the Turk to the sword. Leo hypothecated the same security with Fugger, of Augsburg, and got thirty thousand gulden. The expedient hit upon for the liquidation of these debts was the public sale of indulgences. Ximenes had interdicted them throughout Spain—France was already liberal. Germany presented the most promising field. Here, they argued, we may sell the peasantry passports to heaven, and set Italian money bags rattling with good coin.

When Luther assumed the theological chair at

Wittenberg, the Pallium was absorbed with financial perplexities; the only way to extricate it was to play on the faith of the simple-minded people, and so extort the necessary funds. It was a desperate expedient. If we may regard the enlightenment of the public mind as worth anything, Luther's years were now full of useful labour; blessed with great physical endurance, and an intelligence and comprehension much above the common order, his philosophy, as well as his theology, was accepted as final by the scholars as well as the commonalty of the German provinces. Trutfetter being now providentially removed, Carlstadt and Peter Lupinus took up the cudgels—proved, however, not strong opponents to the liberal opinions of Luther. The spell of mysticism was still upon him, growing stronger in fact as he advanced; his opinions, not yet matured or clearly defined, were sometimes at variance with each other.

The first words of Luther, publicly uttered in the German tongue, upon religious subjects, were in a sermon preached in November, 1515. In terms not altogether delicate he applies the symbolical language of the *Song of Songs* to the operations of the Holy Ghost, which acts on the spirit through the flesh. In December of the same year, we detect him unfolding the mystery of the Trinity according to the principles of Aristotle, the theory of *being*, *motion*, and *rest*.

His audiences during this period were remarkable, not more for their number than for their character. The foreshadowing of an eminent destiny for the preacher drew to Wittenberg a concourse of the best minds of Germany. The novelty of preaching in the mother tongue appealed to the commonalty, who sat at his feet, willing listeners to what they could comprehend. Transfixed by the warmth and earnestness of his appeal, perhaps they involuntarily looked over their shoulders, expecting to see Kaiser Frederick step in, sword in hand, shouting his promise of protection. Luther's efforts were directed as much against superstitions of this sort as any other error. He studied to instil into the minds of his hearers, by fair and just means, his own simple and logical faith; fair and just means we may say, but sometimes characterised by a vehemence which approached rashness. He did not halt to flatter the taste of the punctilious, or to apologise for the established German custom of calling things by their right names. Emphatic directness marked every passage and every fragment of his utterance. All this time, Spalatin, chaplain of the Elector, continued his friendly offices at court; frequent letters passed between himself and Luther. In one of these Luther alludes again to the great value of Tauler's sermons; "There is not," he says, "in our language, or in the Latin, a theology more harmonious with the gospels.

Try them, and see how gracious the Lord is." So was the influence of the dead mystic working even at this late day, although the entire number of those who embraced his philosophy was not greater now than in his own time.

The first church that Luther had preached in at Wittenberg was a poor affair, aged and ruinous, the pulpit constructed of a few planks laid conveniently. Now, the Town Council invited him to preach in the city church, more ample in its accommodations and complete in its appointments. Hitherto, the only languages with which he had been familiar were his own and the Latin; now, urged by the desire for a complete knowledge of the Bible, he undertook Greek and Hebrew, incited to them, probably, by the scholarly works of Erasmus.

He was at this time the type of a perfect manhood; of medium stature, squarely built, with a round, small head, and eyes "like a falcon." His voice was rich and powerful, and his manner that of a man absorbed in the work before him. Cochlæus and other detractors attribute part of his power over men to frenzy. We shall see in the sanguinary hours to come whether it was all frenzy, and was lacking in appeals to the higher manhood and intelligence. Frenzy seldom carries with it the sympathy of contemplative men; he carried not only their sympathy but their active co-operation, labour-

ing hard and constantly to release the common people from their thraldom of opinions and superstitions. A mighty task this, undoing the habits of centuries.

Luther advocated love, kindness, gentleness, especially in those engaged in theological studies. His own manner, however, was in strong contrast with this teaching. Naturally passionate, he could rise in debate to the climax of bitterness, and hurl at the heads of his opponents such violent abuse that nothing short of angry repartee could be expected. "Thoughts flew out of his mind like sparks from the iron under the stroke of the hammer." If we may believe him, he never worked better than when inspired by anger; if only angry, he could write, pray, and preach well; his whole temperament and understanding being quickened, he could then rise superior to every obstacle.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE INDULGENCE BUSINESS.

FOR an unlimited time the Turk had been a convenient enemy of Rome; if there were ever questionable expenditures, charge them to the Turk; if money was needed for whatsoever purpose, get up a small quarrel with the Turk, rouse the blood of the faithful to virtuous indignation against those base infidels, then would all wallets open and money fly to the rescue of Rome. Columbus said of money: "He who possesses it has the power to transport souls into paradise;" and what Columbus thought seems to have been assumed by the powers at Rome; at any rate, there never was a time when they were inconvenienced by an over-supply.

Near Wittenberg was the town of Jüterbogk. Here lived one John Tetzel, commissioner of the Pope, distinguished for shamelessness of tongue and bad morals, living even then under a shameful protection for criminal acts. This Tetzel was selected as the German agent for the sale of in-

dulgences, not by any means the first of the business, for since 1501 it had been prosecuted with more or less success elsewhere. Tetzel was selected evidently because of his persistency and shrewdness in the transaction of business affairs. Elector Frederick of Saxony, with characteristic determination, put his foot down, and absolutely refused to permit their sale in his territory. Joachim of Brandenburg, on the contrary, advocated them, even assisted at the vendue, taking care, however, to reserve a portion of the proceeds for the purse of his brother Albert of Mainz, Archbishop of Gotha. This was promising business, and prospects for a larger harvest of coin were good, especially with the endorsement of the archbishop and the agency of Tetzel. Spiritual pardon must have been popular if there were many who needed it as badly as Tetzel did. The price of these indulgences was scaled according to the nature of the license and the ability of the recipient to pay. No crime so heinous, no performance so contemptible that it could not be shielded from the vengeance of Heaven by these bits of parchment.[1] They were cried in public places like penny ballads, and formed a part of the baggage of itinerant merchants. Among those who condemned the traffic in indulgences as a swindle and a cheat was a gentleman of Saxony, who

[1] See Appendix.

heard Tetzel at Leipsic, and was much shocked at the imposture. He went to the Church and asked Tetzel if he was authorised to pardon the sin of intention, or such as he intended to commit. Tetzel replied in the affirmative, and after some chaffing, the gentleman paid thirty crowns for an indulgence, by virtue of which he was to be forgiven for beating one against whom he had a grudge.

Soon after this, Tetzel set out for Leipsic, and this Saxon gentleman, overtaking him in the forest of Jüterbogk, gave him a severe drubbing, and carried off the box in which he had his treasures. Tetzel raised a great clamour for this act of violence, and brought an action before the judges of the district against the perpetrator. The latter, however, pleaded the indulgence, and was fully acquitted.

We have little need to question regarding Luther's position in regard to this matter of the indulgences, even though they were endorsed by the head of the Church, who was then also the head of all the people. What could the Doctors do but sit meekly by and say little. Luther, however, was not of this submissive sort. Turning to Staupitz, one day, he remarked, "I will declaim against this gross and profane error; write against it, do all in my power to destroy it." Staupitz, amazed and now angry, replied, "What! would you write against the Pope? What are you about? They will not permit you to

do this; your head will go for it, and you will follow the hundred others who have opposed these methods! I pray you desist." "Suppose they must needs permit it," continued Luther. The objections of Staupitz he disregarded; Staupitz was subject to the powers that were; Luther looked beyond these for his authority.

Many of Tetzel's most faithful adherents deserted him when they found what manner of man he was, betaking themselves to silence, not caring to be found in his company. "Servant of the Pope and the devil," Luther called him. "Came among us selling indulgences, practising on the credulity of the people. I could not refrain from protesting against it, resolved to oppose the career of this odious monk, to put the people on their guard against the revival of these impositions.

"At the outset I expected to be warmly encouraged by the Pope, for I had little more than used his own language, as set forth in his decretals against the rapacity and extortion of the collectors." This may have indicated honest simplicity, or the bitterest irony. At all events, it was on the verge of fearlessness, where few before him had dared to venture. The true position of the Pope, as soon as discovered, would have hastened a weaker man to retraction, and the craving of pardon.

On the night of the Vigil of All Saints, 31st of

October, 1517 (Hallow Eve), Luther walked through the streets alone, and nailed upon the gates of the parochial church, at Wittenberg, a series of propositions, *ninety-five* in number, in which he declared he would hold a series of disputations for the purpose of explaining the power of indulgences, thus making good his promise to Staupitz. Sometime thereabouts, Elector Frederick, in his Schweinitz castle, had a dream; dreams were of consequence in those days. Frederick thought he saw a monk writing certain things on the door of the chapel at Wittenberg Castle, writing in so bold a hand that it could be read clear over to Schweinitz. While he wrote, the pen grew miraculously long, so long that it reached at last to Rome, and in its flourishings chanced to touch the triple crown of Leo X., and would have overthrown it but that the Elector jumped out of bed in time to save it, and found that he was only dreaming.

Wittenberg and vicinity was set on fire by the audacity of these propositions, not with a sudden and explosive flame, but as if long smouldering embers had now been fanned into life by the breath of intrepidity. The preamble set forth that, "From a desire to elicit the truth, the following theses will be maintained at Wittenberg under the presidency of the Rev. Father, Martin Luther, of the Order of the Augustines, Master of Arts, Master and Lecturer in

Theology. He asks that such as are not able to dispute verbally with him will do so in writing. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."[1] Nearly every article of these propositions was directed against the indulgence business, and its promoters in Germany. Luther had diplomatic insight enough to see that no good could come to Germany, or to any other State, for that matter, when wares like these were hawked about the streets. An insatiable leech hung upon every purse, imposing upon many absolute want and penury. He honestly believed that if the Pope were cognizant of the extortions of the indulgence preachers, "He would rather the metropolitan church of St. Peter were burned to ashes than see it built with the skin, and the flesh, and bones of his sheep." The ostensible direction of the money collected through indulgences was the building of St. Peter's; as a fact, however, it went into the private purse of the Pope's sister.

At the time of the publication of these theses, Tetzel was at Frankfort on the Oder, engaged there in his traffic under the endorsement of the Archbishop of Mainz. Luther's bold pronounciamento was not long in reaching his ears. Its influence upon his trade affected him more seriously than any theological significance. Fulminating with rage and

[1] An epitome of these ninety-five theses may be found in the Appendix; also a transcript of one of these indulgences.

alarm, he proceeded at once to offset it by frenzied harangues, and the publication of a series of opposing resolutions. Full of invective and blasphemy, bristling with the bad temper for which Tetzel was notorious, these resolutions outnumbered if they did not outweigh those of Luther. He supplemented them, too, by a new set—these last of a theological order—and, taking them as a basis, he claimed the privilege of being put on the list for doctrinal honours. With a view to effect, he burned the propositions of Luther publicly in the city of Frankfort. The smoke from that burning paper went out over Germany almost as rapidly as did the words of Luther. There was a tremor in the balance of public opinion. National and individual liberty on the one side, vassalage and dependence on the other. Poverty and distance were serious obstacles to the interchange of opinion on the part of the peasantry, who, scattered through the forests, stood there in uncertainty, asking "what next?" Substantially, education was all in one direction; fealty to the Church first, loyalty to the State afterward, personal piety nowhere, for this detracted too much from the power of the Church regnant, and so was discouraged. Simultaneously with the posting of these ninety-five propositions, Luther wrote a letter to Albert, Archbishop of Mainz, explaining what he had done, and why he had done it. All this time he

was in entire ignorance of the fact that half the money secured by indulgences was retained by the Archbishop himself.[1]

This letter contained the marrow of his propositions, elucidating as far as possible his motive in taking this course. It was written upon the same day with the propositions.

Upon that Sunday of All Saints, at Wittenberg, hinged an unapprehended future. No one, not even Luther himself, dreamed or hoped this twig, set in the mid-stream of Christianity, would divert the torrent of fifteen centuries, and in time divide it. No one foresaw the fierce baptism of blood which was to follow the war of words. Luther was seeking to engraft no new faith. The slave of no personal ambition; he sought only to hold the Church solidly upon its scriptural foundation. His sermon on that historic Sunday was exceptional for temperateness and mild logic.[2] With calm deliberation he maintained the substance of his theses, step by step, as he had pronounced them; as yet his adversaries were silent.

[1] Albert was a young man of only twenty-four, with no particular theological basis, politic and prudent, with a heart of strong German sympathy, but outwardly and professedly a strong champion of Rome; kept so by financial entanglement which he saw no other way out of. The indulgence traffic was making good a weakened credit and lining his purse.

[2] See Appendix.

All these years of study and labour he had studiously watched the tide of popular feeling; had applied the touchstone to public sentiment, and well knew the temper of those about him. He knew, too, that serious, thoughtful men would look favourably upon his declarations, and even then would not believe that the aversion of the Pope was of such a degree that it would uphold the scheme of these crafty lieutenants. Luther saw the matter from only one standpoint: "The just shall live by faith." Of the schemes of diplomacy and finance of the Church he took no cognisance. To him the Church was the source of spiritual teaching; he did not reckon on the vastness and complexity of its other machinery, a subject of more interest just then than doctrine and devotion. The means of procuring money were of little consequence, so that it was got in plenty. Luther's attack on indulgences was not necessarily so formidable as that of Cardinal Ximenes, of Spain; had not the weight of authority at the back of it, but its motive was different. Ximenes wanted all the money for himself; Luther wanted only sincere piety, akin to that which he read of in his Bible—not a mawkish show of forms, but a living personal faith.

Germany was becoming more and more opposed to the centralisation of power at Rome. About this time, too, she was slowly emerging from the confusion of tongues which had so long militated against her

advancement. Aside from the influence of Luther, she was on the ascending plane, the sciences and arts were growing symmetrical.

Contemporaneous with the youthful and vigorous Wittenberg University was that of Frankfort on the Oder. The two occupied places theologically antagonistic. To Frankfort Tetzel now addressed himself, enlisting as his champions, Conrad Koch and Wimpina, learned and influential men, familiar with debate, and not unwilling to execute Tetzel's commissions. They wrote propositions directed against all the faculty of Wittenberg, but particularly against Luther.

James Hochstraten, inquisitor of Cologne, who had already piped himself hoarse against Reuchlin, entered the lists also. Hochstraten was no driveller. He advocated the rack, the pyre, the gibbet, and other uncomfortable methods of discipline for Luther and his following. Leo. X. made light of the affair, and charged it to "monkish quarrelling and too much wine." "When they get sober again," he said, "they will repent of it, for Fra Luther is a man of fine genius."

Thunder was now everywhere breeding in the air. Strong men were rising up on both sides, either in defence of principles, or from motives of policy. Even Luther flinched before the ominous storm. The printing-press, now an important factor, had

already scattered his propositions far and wide; they were upon the lips of every one who could read, and in the hearts of every one who could appreciate the gravity of their meaning. "I 'm sorry," said he, "to see them so extensively printed and distributed." When he beheld the eagerness of the people, he doubted the wisdom of his own course, wished he had taken a little more time in which to mature his ideas; but the result of what he had done was something not to be foreseen. From every side came upon him now tidings, *pro* and *con*. Though he could not so understand it, this was truly the inception of a mighty revolution.

## CHAPTER IX.

### LUTHER'S PERPLEXITIES AND DOUBTS.

ON further thinking of it, the necessity of an address to the Pope from Luther's own hand became obvious. The very inference that he might be the agent in dismantling the ancient and beloved Church, that his act might possibly offer vantage-ground for the opponents of the religion of Christ, was overwhelming. "I was attacked," he writes, "and misrepresented. The malevolence of Tetzel and Eck I knew well, nor was I mistaken, for I learned that everywhere they were assiduously inculcating among the people that I was an obstinate heretic, an enemy of all religion, and a dangerous man to be left at large. By playing upon the credulity of the people, they would like to place me in the light of a beast, fit only to be hunted down. All this time they carried on their detestable traffic in indulgences, binding poor souls more firmly in the chains of an odious despotism. To show the world the character of these men, and protect the people

from their machinations, I wrote to Pope Leo a most submissive letter; at that time my eyes being not fully opened to the abominations at Rome. I may err, but a heretic I will not be, let my enemies rage and rail as they will."

We are now passed into the spring of 1518, this letter to the Pope having been written in that year. Time enough for a calm to have succeeded the tempest which raged since the promulgation of the theses; but the calm did not come. National pride as well as religious zeal was at its maximum; here in Germany national pride was growing vastly. Maximilian, then wearing the imperial crown of Germany, said to Elector Frederick, "Take good care of that monk;" would doubtless have taken good care of him himself, but his days were creeping apace, and already he was looking forward to his successor.

Luther himself was nearly on the point of retreat from his assumed position; might have retreated, had he listened attentively to the conservative, inaggressive voices about him. He pursued his course at the university in the accustomed way; was found in his place at the appointed time, and listened to more respectfully than before. The prospect of a sanguinary conflict evidently confronted him. He shrank from the responsibility of plunging the whole Christian world into tumult, and would doubtless have gone quietly forward to the end of his days in the pursuit

of his calling, but the gauntlet he had thrown down was eagerly caught up. Such howlings and ravings came from every side as would have driven a more timid man mad; the world of theology was flying upon him with the weapons of innuendo, hatred, and contempt. He was no churl to stand inanely by and receive abuse; not given over to that meekness and diluted manhood misnamed "pious submission." Luther became mad, righteously mad, and hurled back such emphatic replies that the whole firmament of letters was ablaze with a new light. Many of these emanations were evolved in the heat of passion, were harsh and unmanly, barren of logic, and of little value to his cause. Instinct assumed ascendency over the usually masterful man; he was for the time disconcerted by the suddenness and ferocity of these attacks, many of them coming as they did from those whose sincere friendship he had hitherto enjoyed.

Dr. John Mair, of Eck, professor of theology at Ingoldstadt, Bavaria, commonly known as "Dr. Eck," was a persistent and formidable opponent of Luther and his school. Hitherto Eck and Luther had been sympathetic friends. Eck was a profound and fearless scholar, a man of large reputation and influence.

This opposition came with particular severity, and put Luther to his mettle. At every step in the lengthy discussion that followed, Dr. Eck sought, as we shall see, to confuse and confound his old friend.

Notwithstanding Luther's assurance to the Pope, authoritative censure was likely to be visited upon him. Thomas De Vio, of Gaeta (or Cajetan, he being known commonly only by this latter name), had taken the matter in hand, and demanded from Luther a retraction. The latter had previously been summoned to Rome to give an account of himself, but through the influence of Elector Frederick and the Wittenberg University, the place of inquest was transferred to German soil. "Our prince," says Luther, "has taken Carlstadt and myself under his protection, and without any solicitation on our part. He will not permit them to drag me to Rome, and this vexes them." The free city of Augsburg was selected, and Cajetan was to be the inquisitor. The theological atmosphere of Augsburg was not exactly what Cajetan desired; atmosphere had much to do with theological results about this time. Wittenberg people were exultant at the result of their efforts, and the present overruling of the cardinal by the temporal power was significant; heretofore the cardinals had been arbitrary in this matter, here was a new order of things. To bring about so desirable a change, all Luther's friends had laboured assiduously, new friends developed with influence strong enough to be heard favourably at the papal court. Cajetan was chagrined at these slightings of his authority.

At Heidelberg, whither Luther had been in the spring of 1518, to attend the chapter general of the order of Augustine, he had made a deep and lasting impression.

During Luther's journey, a noble knight of the vicinity, learning that he was to tarry at a certain place, and yearning for the honours and emoluments that would accrue, could he be safely caught up and transported to Rome, resolved to hazard the attempt. He ordered his armed retinue to prepare hastily, for there was no time to be lost, the aspiring noble being urged and commended to the task by his confessor, who assured him that he would be doing a good work, and would save many souls. He set out at early dawn, making his way along the picturesque *Berg Strasse* or mountain road that skirts the forest of the Odenwald between Darmstadt and Heidelberg. Arriving at the gates of Miltenburg in the evening, he found the city illuminated, and the town itself full of people, who had come thither to hear and see Luther.

More indignant than ever was the noble knight; indignation grew to rage when, arriving at his hotel, the host greeted him, "Well, well, Sir Count, has Luther brought you here too? Pity you are too late. You should have heard him. The people cannot cease praising him." In no mood for eulogy, the knight sought the privacy of his room. Awakened

in the morning by the matin bell of the chapel, sleep had assuaged his ire, and his thoughts were at home, where he had left an infant daughter at the point of death. As he drew aside his curtain, he saw the flicker of a candle in the window opposite, and waiting a moment, heard a deep, manly voice utter the words, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." He heard the voice further continuing in a strong, fervent petition for the whole Christian Church, and the victory of the Holy Gospel over sin and the world.

Being a devout man, his interest was aroused, and, donning his armour, he inquired of the landlord who that earnest man was that he heard across the street. "That earnest man," responded the landlord, "is the arch heretic Luther himself. Has your grace a message for him?" "Ay," said the knight, "but I will deliver it with my own lips," and with a dubious shake of the head he crossed the street, entered the house, and in a moment stood before the object of his search. Luther instinctively arose from his chair, surprised, and not a little disconcerted by the sudden appearance of a stalwart armed knight, perhaps having an unpleasant suspicion of his errand. "What is the object of this visit?" inquired Luther. Twice and thrice he repeated his question before receiving a reply. At length the knight, having recovered somewhat from the spell upon him, said,

"Sir, you are far better than I. God forgive me for intending to harm you. I came here to make you a prisoner; you have made a prisoner of me instead. It is impossible for a man who can pray as you pray to be an enemy of the holy church, a heretic." "God be praised," said Luther, now relieved from his suspicions; "it is His word and Spirit that has subdued you, not mine, though I may be chosen to bring His word to honour in Christendom. Go now your way therefore in peace, my lord. He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it to Christ's coming. If it be God's will, you shall yet behold miracles; how the Lord will break many swords like yours, and cut the spear in sunder, as He has to-day." Convinced and confirmed, the knight lost no time in making his way homeward, attended by his retinue, now still more curious to know the object of this hasty expedition. Arriving at the bedside of his daughter, he found her now convalescent and out of danger, and falling on his knees, he thanked God for all that had happened. A few years later, when Luther confessed his faith before Charles V., among the assembled nobles who stood on Luther's side was this knight, who had once thought to overthrow and destroy him.

The ancient and splendid ruin of Heidelberg Castle, which clings to the hillside of the Neckar, was then the princely residence of Count Palatine Wolfgang,

Duke of Bavaria. There, with Lange and Staupitz, Luther was an honoured guest, bearing an autographic endorsement from Elector Frederick, and entertained with noble hospitality.

In the Augustine monastery at Heidelberg, Luther maintained a disputation, five doctors of divinity opposing him; so courteously was the whole affair conducted, that every one of the distinguished auditors was surprised and gratified. They rose from it, if not convinced, at least deeply impressed. "He is like Erasmus," said the Heidelberg critics, "except that he openly professes what Erasmus is satisfied with insinuating."

The immediate effect of Luther's diversion was most visible in the scholastic world; it erected, or projected rather, a new school for which public opinion since Tauler's time had been gradually preparing itself. In all Luther's theses there is not one proposition which had not suggested itself previously to others. Political and religious conditions had evolved them; they were not invented to gratify the caprice of disputatious ambition. Erasmus had long been impressed with like truths, but evaded their publication; others too were conscious of them, but lacked the qualities essential in their maintenance. Now, however, that one had come forward willing to express long-felt convictions, everything was changed. With no more influential title than that of Doctor of

Divinity, with no traditions of gentle birth, except such as the Pastorals and Georgics of Thuringian forests could bestow, he had yet enough of that vigorous determination which gives permanency to new philosophy, and starts the growing world afresh in new directions. Vanity of personal ambition or the promptings of hatred alone, must have entirely failed in the exploit.

Besides Elector Frederick and Spalatin, Staupitz, Carlstadt, and many others, Luther had one friend withal, who, if he lacked the vehemence of the master, possessed other qualities which have given him at least the second place in the progress of events. Luther was a tempest, this man was oil upon the waters. When the tempest raged fiercest, he tempered it with mildness, healed the wounds inflicted in debate, and broke the weapons which threatened to destroy the whole cause.

Fifteen years Luther's junior, he was born of equally humble parentage, in the Lower Palatinate; his father's name was Schwartzerd (Black earth), but like his tutor Reuchlin and other scholars of his time, he preferred the Greek appellative, so became Melancthon. As a lecturer at Tübingen University, he had come to correspond with Luther. This correspondence preceded a life-long friendship. All through the stormy scenes of coming years Luther was his debtor; but for his industry, much that we

now have would have been lost to us; he having carefully preserved the data and much casual conversation of his time.

We have already seen that Luther was a letter-writer as well as a speech-maker. The reputation he had established at Wittenberg, even before his iconoclastic proceeding, attracted the attention and admiration of every scholar then living. Now that he was attacked by a legion of adversaries, many of these gathered about him a cordon of learning and resoluteness. Those who expected to see Luther standing alone, were surprised at the strength and dignity of his following. The politician was there as well as the theologian; politicians in those days were not unlike those of the present, they were there for a purpose, what purpose we may see as the contest progresses. Tetzel sent an agent to Wittenberg with copies of his theses; the students there got hold of and burned them publicly. Luther himself denies any part in this proceeding. He wrote to Lange at Erfurt, deploring the act as unworthy the cause, and of no effect in the prosecution of his scheme. Every act of his during the early times of his tempestuous trouble assures us of the total absence of any striving for personal aggrandisement.

Christian Scheurl, town councillor of Nuremberg, took Luther to task for not publishing his theses himself. Luther replied, in a kindly letter, that he

never had expected such a publicity for them; he had merely sought some discussion with those about him on the subject, that he might establish points in his own mind. "If I had thought they would have made such an impression," says Luther, "there are some propositions I would have left out, and others that I would have asserted with greater confidence. They contain some points, too, still questionable." When Luther discovered the magnitude of the work he had undertaken, he was for a time disconcerted, wrote voluminously trying to explain his motives, and sought to allay the tumult, but political complications in Germany were following fast upon theological discussion, which had now extended to the limits of Christendom, gathering strength and increasing impetuosity as it went; retreat and retraction would now avail nothing.

## CHAPTER X.

### CALLED TO ACCOUNT AT AUGSBURG.

WITTENBERG had become a theatre of events; all eyes were directed toward the little city in the forest; the University was crowded with earnest and anxious students desirous of sitting under the great teachers there. What Ascham later on did for the native tongue of England, Luther was now doing for Germany. In both localities the effort to maintain the classical languages was also an effort to keep the poor and illiterate in ignorance. Great scholars were demi-gods and oracles. What they said and did had as much weight with the unlettered as the utterances of a prince or a law of the State. Few, if any, held independent opinions, and they believed what they heard according to the eminence of its source.

Maximilian, in the hope of becoming arbitrator in the dispute now raging, aspired to the papal chair; but his days were waning, and his efforts consequently feeble. The efforts of Elector Frederick with the curia carried much more weight, and received prompt

attention; he was a man of arms and resolution, abundantly discreet withal. Frederick had given ample evidence of his friendliness in his resolute efforts for the safe-conduct of Luther, whithersoever the powers might command him; and in his successful demand that the inquisition in Luther's case should be held on German soil, the Roman party showed him much deference.

Although alarmed at the imprudence and impetuosity of Luther, he still held over and about him a protection against bodily harm, so considerate and effective that none assailed him, although there are instances when Luther was followed through the streets by armed assassins, ready to take his life, but not willing to accept the consequences; they well knew the resolute character of his following.

Notwithstanding the volume of affairs following upon these events, Luther still continued without cessation at the post of lecturer, confining himself now largely to the elucidation of the Scriptures. There is little doubt that had he kept quietly to the pursuit of his university affairs, the noisy confusion of intemperate debate would have ceased. That was out of the question now; the host had arrayed itself for war, loved it in fact, and there was nothing to do but fight. Thus far the battle had been an epistolary one, of such voluminousness that it constitutes the substance of many ponderous volumes in the libraries

at Leipsic, Frankfort, and elsewhere. Luther was deeply afflicted at the concern and anxiety of his friends, who all came in for a share of abuse from his detractors. Some laid it at this one's door, and some at that. Elector Frederick was one of the principal objects of indignation. "Here are brawlers," writes Luther to Spalatin, "who go about to my infinite vexation, saying that all this is the work of our illustrious prince; that he urged us to it to spite the Archbishop of Magdeburg and Mainz. I am truly afflicted to see him suspected on my account." A few days later, however, under the relentless pressure which his opponents were bringing against him, he urges Spalatin to use his kind offices with the Elector, in order that he shall be refused safe-conduct to Rome, thus giving him an excuse for non-appearance there. The Elector, without Luther's knowledge, had before this exerted himself in favour of Augsburg. Letters also had gone forward from the University to the Pope, urging the same concession.

At the gates of Wittenberg one October morning, 1518, the populace of the little city gathered to bid God-speed to Luther, now on his way to Augsburg. They greeted him with "Luther for ever! Long live Luther!" "Christ and His Word for ever!" replied Luther, half chidingly. "Courage, master, and God go with you," say the crowd; and Luther responds, "Amen." Part way along the road they followed

him, then as they left him he lifted up his eyes and said, "Into Thy hands, Heavenly Father, I commit myself."

Arduous labours, consequent upon recent events, had taxed to the utmost the physical strength of Luther; his journey to Augsburg was slow and painful. At Weimar, however, he was well enough to preach to the multitude that gathered on a Sunday to hear him. At Nuremberg he was received by his friend Linck, and a brother monk, named Leonard. Before leaving this place they supplied him with more presentable garments and a vehicle, he being now quite exhausted by his ailments and the fatigue of the journey. These two friends went with him to his destination.

Once at Augsburg, his first duty is to write a letter to Melancthon at Tübingen. The tone of the letter is despondent even to pathos. He speaks of himself as the probable victim of a conflagration, of the many who are anxious to see him in the flames. "But for you and those about you," he continues, "I am ready to be sacrificed, if such be the will of Heaven. I am not only ready to die, but, what were far worse to me, to be deprived of your dear society, rather than retract the truths I have maintained, or be the means of affording the stupid and bitter enemies of liberal studies and elegant learning an opportunity of achieving a triumph. Italy is prostrate in Egyptian dark-

ness, and her people are ignorant of Christ and of those who love Christ. But we know some influential men who regard true religion. The wrath of God may be administered by our agency, as it is written, 'I will make their princes as children, and the feeble shall reign over them.' Farewell, beloved Melancthon, and avert the wrath of God from us by your faithful prayers."

Ambitious Cajetan, now raised to an importance he had long aspired to, made haste to impress upon the people of Augsburg a due sense of his proportions. The honourable post of cardinal being supplemented by that of papal legate, he surrounded himself with all the embellishments which a liberal use of money and vanity could bestow, expecting to strike dumb every beholder by splendour of display and pure force of millinery. He rode through the streets upon a white palfrey, caparisoned with crimson velvet, and followed by a retinue of servitors. His appointments were of corresponding splendour. Every ceremony in which he took part was attended with such posturings and punctilious gravity, that it even excited the levity of his old master of ceremonies, and the contempt, instead of the admiration, of the citizens. Cajetan's plans for the conquest of the world, and nothing less, by the Roman Church, were elaborate. Just how successful this paragon of gold lace was we shall see when the German crown is without a head

under it. Contrast him, just now, with the simple monk who had set all the world in an uproar, riding through the streets of the city in a peasant's waggon.

Luther had been warned against any communication with the Italians; notwithstanding this, one, Urban di Sierra Longa, pressed himself upon his presence, and urged him to recant. Urban had been commissioned, with many others, to aid in maintaining by such means as these the authority of the Church over Germany, which had thus far been a powerful and valuable auxiliary; one too valuable indeed to lose, and every effort was made to conciliate or cajole it.

Luther's examination before the ecclesiastical court amounted to nothing, although it was organised and conducted with a view to impressing upon beholders its august significance and vast consequence. Luther fell upon his knees before the Cardinal, by whom he was received with condescension, and was thrice bid to rise before he complied. Cajetan urged Luther to retract; in fact, the ultimatum of his first conversation rested upon this one point: Luther must retract, else were there no recourse but a formal trial, and then no telling what might be the consequences. In the presence of the legate, Luther had the good sense to preserve perfect equanimity, even to humour. He could not but have observed that the sympathy of the concourse that heard the harangues was with

him, and he quickly got at the intellectual boundaries of his inquisitor.

"What!" cried Cajetan, "thinkest thou the Pope cares a whit for Germany? Why, with his little finger he can overturn all Germany.[1] Do you think that your princes will rise, with their armies, and defend you? Do not delude yourself; you will be without defence; where then will you hide?" "Under Heaven," replied Luther. "No, no," continued Cajetan, "there is no safety for you, except to retrace the steps you have taken: retract, retract; take back that proposition, that "the merits of Christ are not the treasure of the indulgences. See what the '*Unigenitus*' of Clement VI. says of it."

"The legate thought I knew nothing of this," writes Luther; "but after many efforts to make him listen to me, I raised my voice and said: 'If you can show me that your decretal of Clement VI. says, expressly, that the merits of Christ are the treasure of the indulgences, I will and do retract.' Lord! what a laugh was there at this. The Cardinal was vexed, and, snatching the book, fumbled over the pages till he came to this: 'Christ by His passion *acquired* the treasure.' At the word, 'acquired,' I interrupted him, and held an argument thereon, and

[1] The impression prevailed at Rome, that a slight show of force would speedily put an end to the whole difficulty.

the Cardinal was himself forced to smile at some of my reasonings."

Cajetan laboured also with Staupitz and Linck, even had the grace to appoint these two as mediators; a concession which Luther hastened to recognise in a letter to the inquisitor; "I present myself," he says, "before you again, my father, but only in a letter. I have seen our vicar, John Staupitz, and my brother, Master Wenceslaus Linck; you could not have selected mediators more agreeable to me. I am moved at what I have heard. I have no longer any fear; the fear I experienced is changed into filial love and respect. You were at full liberty to make use of force; you have chosen rather to employ persuasion and charitable kindness.

"I fully admit that I have been violent, hostile, insolent towards the Pope. I should have treated so grave a matter with more reverence. I am penitent for my conduct; I solicit your pardon for it, in the eyes of all men, and I promise you that henceforward I will speak and act in an entirely different manner. I will say nothing further about indulgences, provided you will impose the same silence on those who have brought me into this deplorable position.

"As to the retraction, reverend sir, which you and our vicar require of me with such pertinacity, my conscience will not permit me to give it; and there is nothing in the world, neither command nor counsel,

nor the voice of friendship, nor of mere prudence, which could induce me to act against my conscience. There remains but one voice to be heard, which has higher claims than any other: that of the Bride, which is the same with the voice of the Bridegroom.

"I, therefore, in all humility, supplicate you to bring this affair immediately under the eyes of our Holy Father, Pope Leo X., so that the Church may definitely pronounce what is to be believed, and what rejected."

This letter was forwarded to Rome by a special courier. The conference, after some discussion and bandying of words, ended with the legate's command for Luther to leave the place, and come no more before him, unless it was to retract all and ask humble forgiveness for what he had done. "Your Reverence has seen my obedience in this great journey I have undertaken," writes Luther, in a letter of October 18th, "infirm as I am in body, poor, without the means of living. I cannot remain longer here, losing my time, and being a charge to the dear fathers Carmelite, who have lodged and entertained me. I go, therefore, confiding in God."

During his stay in Augsburg, Luther had been repeatedly urged to preach there; better counsels, however, prevailed; at least it would have been an ill-timed proceeding, and inimical to his case. He, knowing well the animus of his opponents, and their

entire willingness to resort to summary expedients for making away with him, so wished to give them no apology.

Several ambitious persons had secretly informed Cajetan of their willingness to undertake the task of disposing of Luther. They could have done so without difficulty, so far as Luther himself was concerned, for he was careless of his person, and exposed himself unnecessarily. His friends, however, were not without knowledge of the dangers; on the contrary, he was watched night and day, and enjoyed a protection which he knew not of, his own friends, as well as others especially appointed by Elector Frederick, being continually near him. Cajetan himself would not have hesitated to warrant the undertaking, but was far-sighted enough to see that it would be impolitic; knew, too, that he would be held responsible by the resolute people who had espoused Luther's cause, and so was anxious to hurry him out of his domain.

Already Rome had issued preliminary notice of the bull of excommunication against Luther, although the news of it had not yet reached Augsburg, and that, with zealous partisans, was equivalent to a price upon his head; heretics, with them, had no rights which they were bound to respect, being only proper subjects for the stake and gibbet.

The Romans were also making persistent applica-

tion to Elector Frederick for the delivery of Luther into their hands. Cajetan wanted to be rid of him; so complained to Frederick, and urged him to hasten the monk's departure from Augsburg. Miltitz, too, was on his way from Rome with peremptory demands for the custody of Luther's person.

Altogether, conditions did not look favourable for Luther's further stay in the city. Staupitz and his friends having provided a horse and guide, Luther left Augsburg at midnight, accompanied only by Langemantel, who conducted him through obscure streets in order to avoid observation. Next morning Luther's appeal was found fastened to the gates of the Carmelite convent, where he had lodged; put there by a monk, but by knowledge and authority of his superiors. Search was made for the daring offender, but he had taken himself away.

"Fears death!" says Ulrich von Hutten to one who reflected on Luther's hasty departure; "there is no one in all Germany who knows so little of the fear of it as Luther; he despises it."

"Nothing now stands in the way of Luther's capture but Wittenberg University and the Elector," said the Bishop of Brandenburg; but there was much else.

Miltitz brought with him the consecrated Golden Rose, as a sort of sop with which to conciliate the Elector Frederick. This temptation was one of con-

sideration, an honour seldom conferred upon any but kings; and Frederick hesitated before giving his answer regarding its acceptance. As matters turned in the future, however, it is well that Frederick concluded at last not to receive the distinction. Instead of it, he wrote a politic letter to the Pope, which, while it acknowledged faithful allegiance, still maintained that no competent judges had yet heard and passed judgment upon Luther's case. All this time Luther was suffering not only the pains of mental distress, but physical debility also; a deranged stomach weakened and depressed him. Nothing but his own manfulness, and the fortitude of friends about him, now maintained the struggle. The opposition was strong, and promises for the coming new year were anything but favourable.

## CHAPTER XI.

### LUTHER'S FRIENDS, AND THE DISPUTATION WITH ECK.

WE may readily see that Germany, as a part of the Christian world, had, up to this time, laboured under peculiar disadvantages; wanted coherence and individuality; wanted a prevailing dialect, one of the strongest allies of national unity; sympathy could not be complete without it. She wanted a collective conference; one in which the various interests could be harmonised by immediate intercourse. Now each city was a walled town, at odds with its neighbour, and jealous of every advantage. The intervening forests were battle-grounds, where the princes settled their disputes by an appeal to the sword. Rome exercised authority over these millions of people; nor is it strange that she sought to perpetuate the confusion, for that alone insured her supremacy.

In the sixteenth century Germany was speedily attaining an advanced position among nations. The

Basle press, kept busy by Erasmus, was spreading over this country, as well as others, the seed of a new era. People who had eyes were learning how to use them, instead of trusting to the eyes of others. People who had tongues, too, were growing testy.

The very idea of translating the classics to a native tongue had been abhorrent to most scholars; when, however, the preservation of nationality, independence, and political events demanded it, there was no other way but that of submission.

It is possible that religious events might have rested awhile just now. Both parties were upon uncertain ground, and expediency would have demanded a truce; but the death of Maximilian in January, 1519, complicated affairs. Passive as may have been his late years, owing to age and loss of influence, his methods had been discreet and favourable to Germany. Now, however, conditions were changed; a collision between the Church and the State was imminent in the selection of one to fill the place made vacant. Here, at this time, it was that the tenure of Roman arbitration over Germany first began to slacken. Just now, instead of seeking to conciliate the peasant population of the German provinces, Rome became toward them more exacting than ever; put contempt on them in every possible way, until "Christian liberty" became the rallying cry, and distributed itself wherever the German

tongue was spoken. "We have had quite enough of this Italian dictation," said they; "they cry us down, call us blockheads and fools, yet do not halt in their efforts to own us. They call us babes in the arts, yet steal the monogram of Albert Durer to put upon their pictures, and spirit away our musicians to play their pipe organs."

Ulrich von Hutten had now come upon the scene; with more impetuosity than discretion, he wielded alike the pen and the sword. There are abundant evidences of his remarkable ability, and he put himself at once in the midst of the conflict. With a little more diplomacy in his composition, he would have been a most valuable acquisition, but the traditions of *faust-recht* were deep in him; if he could not by reason convince his adversary, he would knock his head off. Hutten became a powerful adherent of Luther's principles; would have been glad to take the contest from the schools into the field, and fight it out there; but good judgment was everywhere opposed to summary proceedings; men of more discretion than himself were controlling events. Francis of Sickingen, in Franconia, another nobleman of like tendencies, also espoused the cause of Luther; offered him a secure and safe retreat in his castle; in the face of Luther's protests, set out on an expedition against the Bishop of Treves, with an army of twelve thousand men; fell upon his territory,

and devastated it, returning home only when the Bishop had been reinforced by his friends. This was among the expiring efforts of *faust-recht.* Sickingen fell by the sword the following year.

The States were in a fair way of estrangement from each other; that meant hostility and blood. Ambitious monarchs, however, were providentially stirred up to aspirations for the German crown. That united Germany. They decided upon a prince of their own blood, resolute in their determination that Germans should rule Germany. It so fell, that Frederick, Elector of Saxony, held the casting vote in the election of a new emperor. All eyes were upon him ; the weight of responsibility then was not a light one, but Frederick was intrepid. On the twenty-eighth of June, Archduke Charles, of Austria, Prince of Burgundy, King of Spain, was declared chosen. So the foreign crown-seekers remained at home, and concluded that Germany was getting away somewhat from infantile dependence, being able to walk alone now, without both hands on the papal chair. Charles took the throne under conditions more favourable to Germany than any that had hitherto existed. If there were breathings of religious revolution, it was in his power to make the tide of events entirely favourable to the State and the permanent betterment of her people. Germany was hastening to avail herself of advantages in science,

art, and philosophy, establishing the foundations of that structure which has since grown to such dignified and graceful proportions.

At the time of the tempting offer of the consecrated rose to Frederick, Luther's position was one of anxiety and doubt. Frederick's acceptance of the proffered honour doubtless would have ended Luther's part in the drama. Luther was on the point of going to France, but at the solicitation of Spalatin, who knew more about matters, remained submissively at his post. A significant feature of the times was the appointment of Frederick as regent during the interregnum which followed Maximilian's death. Rome chafed under this inauspicious circumstance; that a prince, who dared to hold the sword between a monk and the Pope, should now, for a time at least, hold the sceptre of Germany, did not augur well for Roman influence there in time to come.

As a reply to the instructions brought forward by Miltitz, Luther wrote a letter to the Pope full of penitence, promising to keep silence as to indulgences, to urge upon all people fidelity to Rome, to set himself assiduously to the task of quieting the people and restoring them in full faith to the church, which he had abused in his efforts to combat the charlatans and mountebanks who sold indulgences. His effort was, in all sincerity, to shield the mother

church from the odium which these unprincipled men put upon her. He felt sure that an honest judge would quickly discover the honesty and prudence of his purpose.

Miltitz, finding his arguments with the Elector, now regent, to little purpose, lost his temper and went at him with some loose rhetoric ; would have abused him, but some recollections of *faust-recht*, and the summary ways that the Germans had of concluding arguments, made him cautious. Also he had found, since coming into the territory, that the number of this people favourable to Rome was exceedingly small, and confined principally to those who were enjoying benefices under her. At Wittenberg it was proposed to throw Miltitz into the Elbe ; but, fortunately for all concerned, he made it convenient to seek fellowship elsewhere as soon as he learned of this inclination.

Meanwhile, Luther had been burned in effigy at Rome, and everything that he wrote or said was there condemned and burned. The press at Basle, however, was industrious, and could publish quite as rapidly as Roman bonfires could destroy.

Notwithstanding Luther's desire to discontinue further debate, the zealots of the Pope, anxious to gain favour, and perhaps distinction, by combating him, assailed him as before. Eck challenged him to hold a disputation at Leipsic, and was not a little

surprised to see Luther appear there in a chariot, seated with Duke Barnim of Pomerania, and Melancthon, and attended by two hundred armed students, with Dr. Lange of Erfurt and a large body of citizens. They evidently meant there should be no repetition of the hazards of the Heidelberg journey. "And I, as an old doctor," said Eck in a discouraged way, "was expected to proceed against all these enemies." But he was thoroughly schooled in debate, and courted it with as much ardour as Luther did.

Duke George drew up the terms of the contest, which was held in the castle; two pulpits hung with tapestries of the warrior saints, George and Martin, being set opposite each other. Carlstadt had all along insisted on his right to open the debate, much to Luther's discomfiture, and a quarrel between them was imminent. Carlstadt proved no opponent to the skilled and brilliant Eck, whose eloquence and arguments made a deep impression. On the following day, however, when Luther appeared, the excitement and interest were unprecedented, as he, with a bunch of flowers in his hand, ascended the pulpit steps.

Luther, now in his thirty-sixth year, had, by his arduous and increasing labour, drawn upon his physical powers to such an extent that he was reduced even to emaciation; his memory halted, and his rhetoric was wanting in the brilliant and dexterous passages which distinguished his opponent. Yet his

melodious voice and joyful manner, coupled with the confidence and self-forgetting earnestness of a man who was asserting the truth, preserved the uninterrupted attention of his auditory; and while he failed to maintain his assertion regarding the primacy of the Pope,[1] his argument that the primacy had no warrant in Scripture was vastly more important and fully succeeded. The only brilliant feature in his peroration was the aptitude with which he used Scriptural quotations in refutation of his opponent's arguments. Attacks upon the Council of Constance were expressly forbidden by the Elector; but Luther, with his usual impetuosity, nearly overstepped the bounds; and Eck was on the point of rising to a victorious rejoinder when Luther by a clever turn disarmed him. Before the debate ended, there was no question as to the division of the Church, and thinking men asked at the close, "Where will Germany stand in this great episode?" This disputation, which continued three weeks, opened the gates to a new future for both participants. As to Luther's success in the argument there is some doubt; but as to the great change that had come over Germany since Trutfetter's time, there could be no doubt. The weight of public sentiment was opposed to Eck and his arguments. "That little

[1] That it dated only from the twelfth century.

Greek" (*Kleiner Griechlein*), as Luther called Melancthon, now put forth a brief treatise averring that a Christian was not bound to receive anything from the fathers as final, Scripture being the true arbitrator. A few months later he followed this by another, putting the authoritative dogmas of the councils, also, in a place second to that of the Scriptures. "He now appears to all," writes Luther, "as wonderful as he really is. A most powerful enemy of Satan and the schoolmen, he knows their folly and the Rock of Christ; he has the power and the will to do the deed." That is, Melancthon's familiarity with the Latin and Greek gave him peculiar advantages over the average controversialist, who, by conventual training, was confined to brilliancy of rhetoric, being allowed no logical source except that of the fathers and the councils. From this on, Melancthon appears as the prime adviser and counsellor of Luther; every act and word of Luther's before it went forth bore the endorsement of this mediator. He changed the whole course of events. Without him religious progress could scarcely have kept abreast of political events; excess and misdirected zeal, *faust-recht* even, would have sought the ascendency by summary methods; these now were all to be set aside.

Doubtless, the awakening spirit of Germany, now advancing with rapid strides along the highways of letters, science, politics, and religion, was viewed with

alarm at Rome. In opposing this condition, Eck was, by all odds, the most potent, active, and efficient force. A man of remarkable capacity, he laboured with diligence to continue the predominance of the papal power; urged, too, by the Fuggers of Augsburg, who were now thoroughly alarmed about the security they had taken for money advanced. Cologne and Louvain came also to the support of Eck; and he, with a commission of seven others, prepared the bull of excommunication against Martin Luther. Eck now hastened to Rome with his papers, where they were submitted to the scrutiny of Cardinals Accolti and Vio,[1] who, with others, conferred with the Pope. Luther's writings were discussed for a month by these prelates; and the conference ended with the issue of a selection of forty-one propositions from them, which were declared to be "false, dangerous, and heretical." The documents closed with these words: "Protect Thou, O Christ, this vineyard set here by St. Peter. We beseech thee, O St. Peter, extend thy protection over this Holy Church of Rome, mistress of the faith. And if the monk, Martin Luther, recant not these scandalous propositions within sixty days of the publication of this instrument, we do declare him a stubborn heretic, to be hewn off as a worthless and

[1] Luther's first inquisitor, Cajetan.

withered branch from the tree of Christendom. Christian authorities are exhorted, in the name of the Holy Church, to seize this arch-heretic in person, wherever he may be, and deliver him into our hands." This document, signed by Pope Leo with much formality and impressiveness, was intrusted to Cardinal Aleander and Eck, for promulgation and execution. Luther, at Wittenberg during all this time, was undergoing such mental tortures that he nearly gave way to morbid despondency. He was seized with a fever, which prostrated him. For a time his reason was despaired of, and dissolution seemed near.

We may believe that he was nearly unconscious of the number and consequence of those who had come over to his side, and were now far from ready to have him reconsider, much less recant and retract. The Elector of Mainz was warned to put away the indiscreet Ulrich von Hutten, whose proposition to put the matter to the arbitration of the sword was ill advised, and whose pen had been active enough to provoke attention. Frederick of Saxony, the friend of Luther, was warned to discountenance the proceedings of his Wittenberg faculty, but made no haste to active demonstration; in fact, he foresaw the results, and that the future of Germany had much at stake in the contest. He knew also that all the world stood in awe of German prowess and determi-

nation, and all that was needed to make her independent was mutual acquaintance and mutual understanding of all who spoke the language. Harmony and unity of her people would assure her political and religious independence. She was now on the high road to this desirable condition, and Frederick did not propose to impede her.

Aleander, on his arrival in Germany, was amazed at the attitude of the people; he found the streets placarded with diatribes, ballads, and pictures, directed against Italy and the Pope; and himself an object of scorn, street badinage, and unpleasant threats. Magistrates bluntly refused to post the bull, and when permission was granted, the odious document was immediately torn down and destroyed.

We find Luther now, for the first time, willing to make public acknowledgment of his contempt for and his objection to the Pope and his acts. The bull having reached Wittenberg December 10th, 1520, Luther convoked the members of the University; and they, followed by a vast concourse of town's-people, went in solemn procession to the Elster gate, where the students had previously prepared a funeral pile. One of the magistrates of the town having lighted it, Luther stepped forward bearing the bull, and with it a copy of the canon law; these together he cast upon the fire, saying, "Because thou hast vexed the Lord's saints, mayest thou be consumed in eternal fire;" and

amid the acclamations of the great assembly, they were consumed.

So terminated the unity of Christendom and the Christian Church. No need for modern facilities to spread this news. Achilles was hit in the heel; and now the spirit of independence, growing since the days of Tauler and Huss, reared itself; shook off the incubus which for centuries it had nursed and sustained; stood there alone and colossal, defying the world and proclaiming religious liberty. Sentimental license may almost permit us to see old Kaiser Frederick, stepping out for a moment from his Salzburg cave, just to see the mighty figure. It was not Luther or Melancthon or Carlstadt this time; it was all Germany. Since the Red Sea laid up its wall of waters, the world has beheld no such spectacle.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE DIET AT WORMS.

ALL or nearly all the electors had now pronounced for Luther. Among his own people his personal safety was as well as insured; still he was aware of the abundant resources and resorts of the Roman Pontiff, and so, harassed by the possibility of sudden and violent death, he appealed to Charles V., imploring imperial protection. In the words of a man who is at the mercy of enemies, he begs that they be restrained from harming him; this he coupled with an assurance of his own loyalty and fidelity to the Crown and person of his Imperial master. Had Luther fallen, even now, at the hand of the assassin, it could have availed nothing favourable to Rome. Public opinion had for many years been growing to this issue. Luther was merely the offspring of an epoch, which was itself the result of various and cumulative conditions. Religious liberty was one of the objects, but not the only one, and a summary dealing with Luther must only have precipitated a

sanguinary conflict, in which the parlour knights of Italy would have fallen under the resolute German sword. History, without Luther even, would have gone on inevitably the same.

We come now to that point of most consequence and significance in our record: the Diet at Worms—Germany without a Government; princes, nobles, priests, laymen, all at odds; chaos triumphant. With this state of things, Charles's power scarcely represented the unific power of Germany. There was an inglorious striving to sit above the salt, which made every man an enemy of his neighbour. The young Charles had plenty of occupation for years to come in reconciling and arbitrating in the childish quarrels of his princes, besides the multitude of foreign complications which were thrust upon him. Although a lad of only twenty, his presidency of the Diet at Worms was characterised by a dignity and sagacity which surprised older and more experienced diplomats.

Passing over the time absorbed in the discussion of political affairs, we find Luther summoned before the Diet. There was a prevailing belief that Charles intended to destroy Luther. Aleander contended that the publication of the bull against Luther was sufficient for all purposes. Others argued that to bring Luther before the Diet, and resort to summary proceedings against him, would be to arouse the

multitude of his following to violence. "That monk makes us plenty of work," said the Frankfort deputy; "some would gladly crucify him, and I fear he will hardly escape them; only they must take care that he does not rise again on the third day." An imperial herald carried forward to Luther a summons of this courteous sort: "Honourable, dear, and devoted Luther. Ourself and the States of the Holy Roman Empire assembled at Worms, having resolved to demand an explanation from you on the subject of your doctrines and your books, we forward to you a safe-conduct to insure your personal immunity from danger. We would have you immediately set forth on your journey hither; so that, within twenty days of the receipt of our mandate, you may appear before us and the States. You have neither violence nor snares to fear. Relying upon our imperial word, we expect your obedience to our earnest wishes." Immediately before the summons was issued, Luther had published a treatise known as his "Address to the Nobles," which was in no way very creditable to himself, and was unquestionably prejudicial to the spiritual as well as the secular interests of his country.[1] Many of his warmest friends deprecated the work, and critics of a later time have regarded it as an

[1] Hazlitt's translation of this address can be found in the Appendix. The adverse criticism which it called forth was owing more to its untimeliness than the matter which it contained.

error of judgment. What may have prompted him to this publication no one may know. There is no doubt but that he was in a desperate strait, and that the emissaries of Rome were upon him and about him on every side; still this could avail him nothing. Luther knew that Aleander was bribing right and left, from the imperial secretaries down to town clerks, to destroy his writings. There was evidently an effort to exasperate him; but it was no time for angry words, when the number and consequence of his following was each day increasing so rapidly that towns and cities strove to see which should be foremost. At Nuremberg, Hans Sachs, who had been singing his own ballads through the streets there, now sang of the "Nightingale of Wittenberg;" commencing at first timidly, soon, eagerly caught up by the people, it became the song of the time. Outside of his theological distinction, Luther had himself gained much reputation as a writer and singer of songs; they had added vastly to his popularity, and introduced his name to those who knew little of his other acquirements.

Luther, like many other leaders, was now troubled by too many advisers, volunteers, for the most part, and many of them not worth listening to. Doughty knights, itching to measure swords with somebody, people with plans and projects, and the usual company of pseudo philosophers, fanatics, and charlatans

who always follow in the wake of illustrious projectors. Already the assembled nobles had heard in the streets of Worms the cry of "*Bundschuh*," the tocsin of the peasantry who favoured Luther.[1] It was an unwelcome sound, and boded not well for the future.

Luther's journey from Wittenberg to Worms was a perpetual ovation. His friends supplied him with money, and a closed chariot in which he might ride, his sickness having so reduced his strength that he was unable to accomplish the journey in his customary way. He was accompanied also by Nicholas von Amsdorf, Jonas, a provost of the University, Doctor Schurf, and the imperial herald, custodian of Luther's person. Everywhere he was treated with the utmost consideration. Although he himself states that he was physically "fearful and trembling;" still, at times comes back that old, passionate heroism, as when he declares he will go to Worms, "though he should find there as many devils as there were tiles upon the housetops." Everywhere his friends, despairing of his safe return, urged him to abandon the journey. At his old home in Erfurt, Luther preached on Easter Sunday, notwithstanding the express mandate of the summons, that he should preach nowhere on the journey.

[1] Years before, the *Bundschuh* had been an organisation of the peasantry to resist oppression.

During his discourse here in the church, which was crowded by his friends and the monks of his former domicile, a portion of the walls of the building gave way with a loud crash. The audience fled from the house in terror; but Luther remained, and finally succeeded in calling them back, telling them that it was the hand of the devil seeking to prevent them from hearing the word of God which he was going to announce. The church was immediately crowded again.

At Leipsic the cup of honour was presented him by the magistrates of the city. Arriving at Weimar, Duke John of Saxony supplied him with more money for his journey. At this time, as in fact during all the journey, he was suffering from physical weakness, yet with remarkable fortitude he persevered, and, amid all the exactions of friendly visitors, and the annoyance of unfriendly ones, preserved a demeanour wholly remarkable for a man in his condition. As the procession approached Eisenach, Luther was prostrated; all recollections of early days now came forcibly back, and passing the house of gentle Ursula Cotta, that one who cheered and comforted his youth, he fell back weeping. There was a proposal to delay the journey; but Luther, anxious to reach his destination, declined to tarry.

By the time Oppenheim was reached, Sturm, the herald, had come to have so much confidence in his

charge, that Luther was allowed to go wherever he listed, and could, had he desired, easily have accomplished his escape. Luther, however, emphatically refused to avail himself of the opportunity, although the prospect for him at Worms was far from favourable. Near Pfifflingheim Luther saw a peasant planting elms; alighting from his chariot, he went forward to the spot, took one of the saplings and planted it, with the words, "God grant that, as the branches of this tree shall flourish, so may my doctrines." This tree afterwards became known as the "Reformer's Elm," and under it many Lutherans found a last resting-place.[1]

On the 18th of April, 1521, the memorable cortege arrived before Worms at noonday.

Record of Luther's coming to Worms and his doings there is very full and explicit. It was a momentous period, and the cotemporaneous historian did not lose the opportunity.

From his watch-tower the town trumpeter discovered the approaching procession, and the populace were soon notified. There filled the streets a great crowd, waiting to catch sight of that man whose name was upon every tongue. Before the chariot rode the herald, his tabard, embroidered with the royal eagle, hanging over his arm. Sitting with

[1] It was destroyed by lightning in 1811 and cut down.

Luther was Nicholas von Amsdorf, Professor of Divinity at Wittenberg, and a Danish knight, named Suaven, who had espoused the cause of Luther. Then followed a number of knights and monks, some mounted, others on foot. They were met by the magistrates and town councillors, and Luther was conducted to his lodgings. Among those who waited Luther's entrance to the city was Leffler, famous in his time as jester to the Duke of Bavaria. He with a great concourse awaited the procession at the city gates, and, holding in one hand a cross and in the other a lighted candle, preceded Luther as he entered a neighbouring church, chanting—

"*Ecce advenit quem expectamus in tenebris.*"[1]

Now, in the solitude of his chamber, he had time to meditate; his friends had also sought retirement. Though weary, he could not sleep, dispirited and depressed as he was with the consciousness of the terrible possibilities that awaited him, and having constantly in mind the serious questions there were to be presented to him on the morrow. There was but one encouraging feature: he had not failed to notice the consideration and attention bestowed by his countrymen during the journey; all along the road this had been plainly manifested, until now it

[1] Behold the advent of him whom we expected would come in darkness.

seemed to have arrived at the point of being aggressive on his behalf.

It was no longer his cause alone, but the cause of all Germany; and when at daybreak, as matins tolled, he fell on his knees, the prayer he uttered was one of entire inspiration; it was more than a petition. Malthesius the chronicler, then a young novitiate, heard it, and stood "as one transfixed; his manner was of such intense earnestness, his voice so strong and full of resolution, that in the silence of the morning the effect of it was miraculous." Luther had sent for Glapion, the Spanish confessor of the emperor, to visit him during the night; but he refused, not wishing to consort with a heretic.

These diets, resolving at last into the formal representative body of the empire, were singular conventions, having no time or place, except by mandate of the imperial power.[1] The warrant for them was inherited from the Teutons, who met similarly to settle finally vexed questions. They were a conglomerate of the spiritual and temporal powers, each being in perpetual struggle for the ascendency.

Up to this time domination had rested with the spiritual part, care being taken to preserve a majority on the clerical side. This Diet of Worms, under the presidency of Charles V., was held in the council-

[1] *Reichstag* was then the name for them, as the German Parliament is now denominated.

house of the city. It was composed of six electors, an archduke, two landgraves, two markgraves, twenty-seven dukes, with a number of counts, archbishops, bishops, and other persons designated; in all numbering two hundred and six individuals. The political power not represented was the "*Bundschuh*," a relic of old *faust-recht* times. This organisation was now favourable to Luther; and it was intimated to the Diet that ten thousand members of it were fully armed and equipped, ready for instant action, should the Diet provoke it. With a tender regard for their own necks, the members of the Diet inclined to treat Luther with more consideration than was common in such cases. Since the time of Huss there had been material changes. There was a dignity of popular inclination at the back of Luther that Huss had never had. When Luther, pale and haggard, but as ever, fearless, walked up the aisle of the Assembly Chamber alone, there was silence; all eyes were fixed upon him.

Charles remarked the insignificant appearance of the man, and intimated that his power could not be great; but Charles had been so long under the languid Castilian influence that he had no clear perception of magnetism. With him, power was a hereditary possession; Luther's was that of a majestic manhood. Here, in the midst of the Diet, Luther stood alone, looked down upon from imperial,

princely, and ecclesiastical eminences. Instinctively his eyes turned toward Elector Frederick, as if to gather encouragement from his ever faithful and powerful friend.

Then arose Leonard Eck, imperial jurist, who opened the charges against Luther, and, with much discretion, changed the nature of the demand from absolute retraction to a "*consent to retract*" certain doctrines enunciated in his books. After the reading of the titles of these books, Luther acknowledged the authorship of them; and, in a dignified response, closed with a request for twenty-four hours' time in which to consider his reply, when he could do so "without fear of blaspheming or danger to the salvation of his own soul." This created a visible stir among the ecclesiastics, who would not fail to demur at his reasoning.

On the day following he was cited before the House of Bishops, who endeavoured to impress upon him the infallibility of their decisions.[1] They sought, by all sorts of ingenious devices, to approach him, but patronage and cajolery did not succeed; for Luther was firm in his refusal to admit them to arbitration in the case; he consented, however, to renounce his safe-conduct, and confide himself to their keeping. "Too much, too much!" exclaimed

[1] They met in the *Heil-haus*.

a friendly noble; "you are conceding too much, and you will bring trouble upon yourself."

At this point in the proceedings, two of the wise bishops hastened off to inform Charles that Luther was on the point of retraction. Now came a messenger, requiring to know if Luther consented to place himself in the hands of the Emperor and the Diet. Luther again refused. Cochlæus, too, came on with all his blandishments, and Luther's friends gathered about him, well knowing the treachery and hypocrisy of this visitor.

He was, in fact, beset on all sides, as though a prize had been offered for the one who should succeed in procuring from him a retraction. Indeed it was a critical time; and what with the clamour of disputation going on over his head, the whispered advice of watchful friends, the occasional cry of "*Bundschuh*," heard on the streets, the hour and the day were heavy with omens.

For the second time Luther appeared before the Diet; again the question concerning his books was put. Luther answered it reverently, begging the patience of the body if he failed in the etiquette of the place and forgot titles.

"I do," he says, "acknowledge these books; I avow them, and always will avow them, so long as they remain the same as I sent them forth. They were not hastily produced, but prayerfully and con-

siderately, after much meditation. In regard to those other writings, wherein are my attacks on the Papacy, although I have used many harsh words, they are not too harsh. We must protest aloud against lies concerning the Gospel, so have I done; I will not submit noble Germany as a prey to devouring Rome and Roman tyranny. I cannot and will not retract these writings. Finally, as to the polemical discussion written against those who have advocated Rome to the injury of ourselves, I admit that I have often used language not altogether fitting to my place and calling; yet I have never made a pretence of saintliness, and even these writings I cannot disavow, when to do so would be to enslave my fellow-men. It might increase the kingdom of Rome, but not of Christ.

"I will not shield my books under any other patronage than that with which Christ shielded His doctrine, when He said, 'If I have spoken evil, bear ye witness of the evil.'"

At the conclusion of this reply, Luther's manner was that of a man transported by conviction; still, conquering his passion, he rose to the loftiest eloquence, and every word indicated unbounded confidence and faith; they were words of conviction; ambition had no part in them. The man who first sought to react the part of Augustine was not now to take upon himself the *rôle* of a demagogue. A

simple and explicit *yes* or *no* was, however, wanting, and the jurist Eck called Luther's attention to it. Luther continued, "Your imperial majesty, and your highnesses, my answer, briefly, emphatically, and without reserve, is this: If the Scripture convict me not, it is not in the power of Pope or councils to do so, for they conflict with each other, and are often mistaken. I have no guide but the Bible, the Word of God. *I cannot and will not retract, because that would oppose my conscience. Such is my profession; expect no other. I have done. God help me. Amen.*"

At this point the assembly was nearly on its feet, so intense had become the interest of Luther's listeners. "If they burn you now, they burn all the German princes with you," whispered a friend, as the States retired to consider. Luther's appeal to the patriotism of Germany had gone like an arrow to the hearts of the Electors, who sat there clasping their sword hilts tighter as the inquisition advanced. There was earnestness in this man, and they felt it.

Without the assembly the excitement was equally great. The city was full of people, who had come to take cognisance, indeed to take part, if need be—plainly dressed peasants, doctors from many schools, knights in full regalia, as though it were a gala day; but such it was not, for deep in every heart was the consciousness that future welfare depended on these deliberations.

The States affirmed that Luther had not yet rendered a simple and precise answer; they demanded something more definite, and proposed to ask him if he considered all or only part of his principles catholic, and if there were any he would be willing to retract. Luther stoutly maintained that he could not act against his conscientious conviction; he had given all the answer they required of him. He averred that, as humanity was liable to error, so were the councils, for they had often contradicted each other; but what was of Divine inspiration he could not disavow. For more than two hours Luther held his argument; the approach of evening, however, terminated it for the day. At the closing, some of the Spanish attendants offered to obstruct Luther's exit from the hall. His friends, however, were promptly by him, and pity the man who now dare harm him! Charles had observed with much discomfiture the disposition to "take good care of that monk" which his grandfather, Maximilian, had enjoined; that his German subjects were far from being unanimously loyal to him, and that his support was confined to a few, who were brave enough so long as they had a defence to hide behind, and a fair share of royal patronage. Charles's retinue for the most part was made up of Spanish blood. They were no match physically for the Teutons.

On the following day Charles convened the electors

and the States, ostensibly to discuss the form of the imperial law against Luther and his adherents, but really to test the disposition of each one; for it was a question now as to which was in jeopardy, himself or Luther. The night following Luther's second appearance before the Diet was a memorable one; his lodgings were besieged by a crowd of nobles, knights, and others of influence, urgent to assure him of their fidelity and appreciation of his actions. Frederick spoke to Spalatin in praise of Luther, his appearance, the impressiveness and elegance of his address, but was amazed at his boldness. Frederick, with William of Brunswick, Philip of Hesse, and other nobles, remained with Luther late into the night, and when they left him it was only to give way to others; so was he now constantly watched.

In the chamber of the Archbishop there was another scene. Having found that imperial demands were hopeless of results, and that to remove Luther would only be to exasperate a populace quite ready for revolution, the bishops now resorted to diplomacy. Their hold upon the community was feeble; they proposed to strengthen it by a show of magnanimity and condescension—an ostentation of willingness to sacrifice their own pet projects instead of Luther.

With this object in view, a mixed commission, a few days after Luther's appearance before the Diet, invited him to come before them. All this time

Luther had been under imperial protection, the herald being constantly by him; the Emperor and his councillors were cognisant of his every word and act, yet he simulated nothing, secreted nothing. Towards the Emperor he was most humble and gracious, towards Rome and the Pope he was defiant. The action of this mixed body, so far as the Diet was concerned, was purely gratuitous; they claimed that it was in the interest of peace and good order.

The tone of the opening discourse by Vehus[1] was conciliatory. Luther's reply was similar in spirit, but with no effort to retreat from the position he had taken. He arose to retire from the company, but on urgent solicitation remained somewhat longer, attentive to the expressions and arguments of Vehus. This consultation amounted to nothing, neither did that one, immediately after it, which Luther had with the Bishop of Treves.

On all sides Luther was besieged by self-appointed advisers; by machinations of all sorts it was sought to extract from him some semblance of retraction. For the purpose of prolonging this useless discussion, his safe-conduct was continued. When at last it was found that Luther was immovable in his opinions, the councillors who were together scrambling for Charles's favour sought to commit the electors and princes to

[1] Chancellor of Baden.

a rejection of Luther's opinions. The electors of Saxony and the Palatinate had already departed, leaving only four in attendance, when Charles conveniently discovered that some business touching the Council of Regency was incomplete.

These four electors accompanied him to the Bishop's palace, where, by a singular coincidence, the Nuncios chanced to be. With much flattery and many smooth words, Aleander urged for an opinion on a document which, to all appearance, was a harmless affair. Joachim of Brandenburg fell into the trap, and replied that the measure would certainly be acceptable to the States. It turned out to be an expression of the position of the States in regard to the Lutheran controversy, wholly opposed to the real spirit of the electors. Aleander, hastily turning over the records of the Diet, engrossed the document with a date several days previous, the Diet being now dissolved, and leaving no quorum. So, by strategy and surprise, they were, to all intents and purposes, committed to the severe censure and sentence of Luther; his own writings and those of his followers being condemned to the flames. Thus were the temporal and spiritual powers virtually at one against Luther.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE WARTBURG.

HOWEVER momentous may have been the questions before the Diet, we cannot fail to notice the quiet dignity of the whole proceeding. The youthful Charles, the white-haired archbishop, the panoplied knights, the fiery orators, all in the midst of most exciting events, maintained a becoming composure, when it seemed that but a touch to that powder-house would have blown all Germany into a hasty war.

On the 25th day of April Luther was entertained by his friends, sentence having been pronounced upon him, and he being ready to depart on the day following, still under imperial escort. He was enjoined to preach no more; but, on arriving at Freyburg, he wrote a letter to the Emperor, in which he expressed regret at being obliged to disobey this command.

Nearing Hirschfeldt he was met by the magistrates, the abbot, and a mounted guard, a great

concourse of citizens, with the Senate, awaiting him within the gates. Here he preached, likewise at Eisenach, where a form of protest was feebly entered.

No one was now journeying with Luther except Nicholas Amsdorf, who had remained faithfully by him since leaving Wittenberg, and a groom. Sturm, the imperial herald, had been dismissed by Luther after the first day's journey.

From Eisenach Luther set out for Waltershausen, there to visit friends. They were now in the solitudes of the Thuringerwald. Amsdorf, looking out of the chariot, discovered two armed horsemen galloping rapidly toward them; without delay he sprang to the ground and made off. These horsemen, arresting Luther, quickly transformed him into a knight, and, putting upon him a false beard and hat, conveyed him to a less frequented part of the forest, reaching very soon Wartburg Castle, where his captors, Hans von Berlepsch and Bercard von Hund, introduced him as Junker George. This castle, famous even then in history, was now to have more fame added. Here St. Elizabeth, a thousand years before, had been betrothed in babyhood to the equally young Prince Louis of Thuringia. Back in times remote from Luther's the *Meistersingers* gathered in its lofty halls, and made the forest ring with their wild music. For many centuries it has figured in history. As it sits there in sight of all for

many miles around, so has it ever held a prominent place in chronicle and story.

Through Amsdorf went out the news of Luther's capture; it flew over Germany upon magic wings, being everywhere met by the cry of protest and alarm. The Pope and the Emperor had it laid at their doors; consternation pervaded both the Roman and German parties. The former, although they would be glad to be clear of the man, would yet be more glad could he be restored. Everywhere was perplexity; even the imperial palace was not exempt.

Whither Luther had been taken, however, all were ignorant, and great was the anxiety of his friends. The Wittenberg people were exasperated, and, but for the prevalence of the better counsels of Spalatin and a few others, would have precipitated an armed contest. The university there still laboured assiduously, though the number of students was somewhat reduced by Luther's absence.

Some of the monks had now taken the aggressive by throwing aside their vows of celibacy; private masses were discontinued, and a radical change in the ritual seemed imminent.

Luther, now in confinement, was most considerately treated; his apartments were comfortably fitted, and his table supplied with delicacies to which he had been little accustomed. This was a much needed change, for his physical condition had well-nigh

become that of a chronic invalid; so long had he had upon him the strain of a controversy maintained against great odds that his mind, too, needed rest.

But where in history do we find record of a man like this abandoning his work? Men of this mould, reformers, men of progress, men with great projects devolving on their individual efforts, sleep with one spur on, always working, always weary, but never ready to rest. The road to successful accomplishment is over the stones and up the steeps, ever up, until death grants a holiday.

There were books there at Wartburg, and more, if Luther wanted them; one of his first works, therefore, was to prepare for the translation of the New Testament. It was Frederick's soldiers who had taken him; it was Frederick who had prepared the castle for his reception; Frederick's purse supplied all; and considerable time elapsed before it became known to the world where Luther was.

Luther had been taken captive the very day of the expiration of his safe-conduct; by the terms of the severe edict at Worms he then being a virtual prey to any who might seek to destroy him. In performing this act Frederick had two objects in view—the safety of Luther, and the augmentation of his following in Germany. There is no doubt of the sagacity and success of the project.

That Luther enjoyed this immunity from the cares

which had beset him we cannot doubt; his spirits at once revived. He writes "from the region of air and bird songs, where birds from their homes in the trees do continually praise God; from the Isle of Patmos." At his request numbers of books were sent him from Wittenberg; and occasionally, in the lonely night hours, some friend who had been previously warned appeared at his door.

We say Luther was alone, but if we may believe his own words he was not entirely so. Always a superstitious man, now that he was locked up in the walls of a great castle, he became doubly so. All the gnomes, spirits, goblins, and sprites that German lore ever told of came with him here to torture and torment him. Some one sent him a bag of nuts; in the night all these nuts leaped out of the bag and went dancing about the room with such a clatter that Luther was thoroughly affrighted, and in agonising prayer urged to be delivered from this legion of devils. While he was engaged at his work of translating a portion of the Psalms, the devil incarnate appeared before him and tried to snatch away the writing. Luther, seizing his ink-bottle, threw it at the unwelcome visitor; it went quite through his spectral majesty, lodged against the wall, and left a blot which remains in part to this day. In his meditations he recalled those last words of his father, "Please God, this be not a trick of the devil,"

words which struck deep into his heart and remained there.

Luther now set himself industriously to the task of bettering the condition of his brother monks. Indeed some of them had already anticipated him, and had thrown aside the vows of celibacy and taken wives; but Luther declared to Spalatin that he could never be induced to marry. Carlstadt had taken things in hand at Wittenberg, and there was unheard-of demolition of plaster and wooden saints and pictures. Glass windows even, such as were coloured or ornamented or bore any ecclesiastical device or effigy, fell under the fury of these fanatics. Emperor Charles had come to a misunderstanding with his French neighbours, who so occupied him that he had no time to look after these home matters.

The tide of German sympathy was now almost wholly turned in the Lutheran channel; notwithstanding the earnest protest of Luther himself, it even assumed his name.

The rector of the grammar school at Wittenberg, being seized with the popular frenzy, locked the door of his school-house, and shouted to the children who sought to enter:—"Go you home; we have no more need for schools and books; for have not Divine prophets come among us who have walked and talked with God? You shall all be filled with knowledge by the grace of God, so get you home

and trust to Him." Carlstadt himself even went so far as to consult with little children; for, said he, "Hath not the Scripture said that God reveals to children what he hides from wise men?"

Indeed, matters were going on in a pitiful way at Wittenberg. For some unexplained reason, Elector Frederick made no effort to stay this madness, while Melancthon was still too young to resist the great influence of Carlstadt and the Zwickau prophets.

This was totally subversive of all Luther's conservative ideas, and when news came to him he was vexed and deeply concerned, and immediately wrote to Staupitz, urging him to use every endeavour to stop the foolishness of these men. Staupitz showed the letter to Carlstadt, who threw it on the floor with the utterance that he should obey God before he would obey man; no arguments were strong enough to impress the archdeacon. Affairs were coming nearly to bloodshed, when Luther one night eluded his watchers, and, leaving a brief note pinned to his door, set out for Wittenberg on foot, against the protest of the Elector, who had commanded him to remain at Wartburg.

The Luther of this autumn of 1521 was not the Luther of the Diet of Worms; he had now gained much in flesh, and his beard was grown quite long, while his cavalier costume and heavy sword gave him anything but the appearance of a meditative monk.

At an inn at Jena, where he stopped, he sat reading a Hebrew psalter, when two young men observed him, and eventually engaged him in conversation, which turned upon himself and his works. The strangers knew not to whom they spoke, although they suspected him to be Ulrich von Hutten. One of them drew a tract of Luther's from his pocket while at supper, and discoursed upon it, expressing the hope that evangelical truth would one day become universal.

Another guest said he was not a scholar and knew little of these matters, but he would be willing to give ten florins to confess to Dr. Luther. In the course of the conversation Luther so far disclosed his identity that the guests were taken aback, and sought to make amends; but he assured them it was not necessary, and was off betimes in the morning; not, however, till they had seen him and bidden him adieu.

At one point in his journey Luther delayed long enough to despatch a letter to his good friend the Elector, explaining his reasons for disobeying the demand put upon him, and urging as an excuse the miserable state of affairs at Wittenberg, which he hoped to investigate and restore to order. It was altogether an unfortunate letter, unjust and ill-tempered; for it upbraided and affronted the man who, above all men, had thrown about Luther the

arm of protection which alone secured him from the violence of his pursuers. Luther soundly abused his generous and powerful patron. This letter reached Frederick before Luther arrived at Wittenberg, and the Elector speedily despatched Dr. Schurff to arrest him on the road and return with him to Wartburg; but Luther resisted, so the two went together in at the Elster gate, meeting Nicholas Amsdorf, who forthwith summoned Melancthon. So were the friends once more in council after a half-year's separation.

From the time of Luther's return, the power of the Zwickau prophets faded, the blind rush of fanaticism ceased, and once more order and good sense prevailed. "My friends have done here quite as much to injure me," he writes, "as my enemies have done elsewhere; I never yet had so hard a blow."

Later on, when Luther had commenced the publication of parts of his Bible translation, Duke George interdicted it; that furnished the motive power to elevate Luther to one of those heights of sarcastic rhetoric—that is a mild characterisation—from which even Melancthon could not pull him down, nor could he be frightened down by the assurance that his words were indiscreet.

Once started in the pursuit of an object, his progress was that of a mighty torrent; strong men quailed before this Titan. Nor was it brute force either; for, with all his strong and sometimes bois-

terous demeanour, there was a foundation of rare intelligence, a genius entirely unique, and the earnestness of the man wholly convinced. He was one of those men who never knew leisure; with a vast propensity and capacity for work, he could keep himself and all about him busy. By nature, from his very childhood passionate and impulsive, those impulses, when thoroughly under control, served remarkable purposes; upon them he rose to vehement heights of oratory, which commanded the attention and admiration of those who assumed to be far above him. Occasionally—and the occasions were not rare—he overthrew himself. Let him only meet in contest a temperament similar to his own, and his rhetoric was harsh even to cruelty; every adjective at his command would be flung at his adversary. Cochlæus declared that Luther was "born of an incubus," and it is true; but that incubus was the power which subjected Germany, a power which he was fearless enough to encounter single-handed, and so bestow upon his native land independence and a freedom to proceed along all the roads of enlightenment; an advance which was accepted with alacrity, to the great betterment of millions of people.

In the light of spirituality his character stands in strong contrast with our ideal saint. Instead of laying his head meekly upon the block of martyrdom,

he rose boldly and defiantly up; earnestly fought, in fact; but his great discretion is apparent in the determined way in which he resisted the warlike efforts of men like Sickingen and Von Hutten. He wanted to do all the fighting himself, and he was able to do it; for if all the swords of Germany leaped at his command, they could not prove so potent as a few words of his, which cut further and deeper, and with more lasting effect, than weapons of steel.

He preferred convincing men to killing them. Even in religious fervour his philosophy was not that of destruction, but of incision, elimination, and elevation.

"My worthy Hal"[1] came in for a large share of Luther's irony just now. With the Golden Rose upon his breast, he was proclaiming himself the champion of Rome, until Luther ran against him with his quill and fairly disconcerted him. Here is another faculty which Luther possessed in a large degree, that of letter-writing. Like many others, however, he abused it often, and documentary evidences of his philippic tendencies, by his own hand, are numerous. If he could not reach his opponent with his tongue, he was sure to do it with his pen, for everything he wrote—and a great deal that he did not write—was spread broadcast.

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[1] Henry VIII., then King of England.

The "*tag blätter*" of that day were little more than a record of Luther's sayings and doings. He was, to all intents and purposes, for a long time the master and source of European thought; and his philosophy so coincided with the national progress that they joined hands and went along together. Instead of the chained and cloistered missal, it was now the liberated book, thrown broadcast before the people. It was the end of one era and the beginning of another in more things than religion.

Another feature in Luther's character is worth looking at. With all his ferocity and stormy logic, he bubbled over continually with good humour; many times when his opponent in debate felt sure that he was beyond self-control, he would suddenly drop his invective to tell a story, as he was frequently wont to do in pointing a moral; in fact, the readiness with which he adapted all circumstances to his own needs confounded his adversaries, who confined their course to the severe logic of the schools. Luther, now returned to Wittenberg, devoted himself to treatises and fulminations which, in the main, only angered those against whom they were directed. No head, no matter how noble, was safe from the knocks of this free lance, who rode up and down the arena of letters challenging, commanding, and condemning in a way that fairly intimidated. Sooner or later all the kings and princes, in his own and other lands, heard from

him, in words often far from elegant, and with very little regard for their eminences.

He had great obstacles to remove, and the tools he used were correspondingly ponderous and effectual. He spent no time stopping mouse-holes with cheese, nor did he try to stay the winds with feeble remonstrance. There could be no temporising now, so everything that he uttered reverberated with emphatic expression; he thundered right and left against his opposers, who were by turns provoked and disgusted, often dismayed, for in the history of centuries no character like this had before appeared. The spectacle of this one man coping with a legion of schools led by imperial command was too remarkable to seem real. Such, nevertheless, was the fact, and men like Erasmus stood paralysed before the gigantic undertakings, the heroism, the revelation, possible to the one eminent and rising genius.

In January, 1523, Luther apprehended that Germany was on the eve of a terrible civil war. Until now, no man had dreamed of Luther's capacity for protracted and complex labour. Night and day, after he left Wartburg, he was without rest, besieged right and left by friends as well as enemies. Up to the end of 1523 he had published, within a period of three years, no less than four hundred and forty-six separate works. The mere contemplation of this is fatiguing; but add to it the numerous

letters written, the private and public conferences, and all the other demands incidental to ordinary life, and we have a volume of labour such as few, very few men could compass and despatch. For a period of years his followers looked to him as their oracle, hung upon him; so long dependent on the mother church, they were now equally dependent on him.

The Zwickau fanatics called loudly upon him to proclaim the limits of gospel liberty. "Be thou our arbiter and guide, we bow to thee." The Waldenses, too, bent the knee before this man, who, of all others, was least willing to be worshipped. "This is not the Church of Luther," he wrote, "but the Church of Christ, established upon His Gospel; take away every other name, but let the Name of Christ remain." By this time the Latin ritual had largely given way to the vernacular in the churches, and in many cases the German melody had also supplanted the other, so strong was the disposition to nationalise everything.

About this time, Goetz von Berlichingen, with thousands of the hard-handed peasantry at his back, was preparing to fall upon the nobles. It was a time of perplexities; nothing but quick, decisive action could avail. This was not the first time the peasantry had assumed the offensive; whirlwinds of the same sort had before devastated the country.

The nobles charged Luther with being the author

of all this mischief; but, far from it, he was devoting his whole influence to subdue so disastrous a movement. His reply to both the peasants and nobles who had addressed him was full of power and excellent reasoning. Nor did he stop at that, but at once put himself in arbitration between the two parties, invoked the lawful powers, and condemned the precipitate action of Von Berlichingen and his followers.

To each party he issued an address; from the nobles he demanded equal and exact justice in the collection of tithes, and other oppressive conditions; the peasants were warned of their dangerous and unwarrantable proceedings, exhorted to gentle means, and reminded that "those who take the sword shall perish by the sword." The document was lengthy but unequivocal. He took no middle ground; no man, or company of men, could gain his sympathy by simply shouting "Luther for ever." He believed that fair and desirable ends were gained by fair means only. Anarchy was a foe even worse than any other, and this breach between the nomads and the nobles had already existed too long. It could never be filled up or overcome by dead men; nothing but calm and deliberate understanding could right matters. So he enlisted himself on the side of good order.

In settlement of their difficulties he advised a selection from each party of a certain number of

representatives, who, in joint session, should arbitrate and come to some understanding, thus appealing from the sword to reason and intelligence. The matter had already gone too far, however; from one place and another came tidings of lawlessness.

To make matters worse, Thuringia itself was becoming involved in this fearful condition, and, under the leadership of Dr. Thomas Munzer, the peasants got possession of a few strongholds. Melancthon half favoured the peasants; Luther condemned both the peasants and the nobles. Anarchy and confusion prevailed. Even after the insurrection had been crushed, and Munzer's head struck off, Luther said, "All the peasants had better perish rather than the princes and magistrates, because the peasants took up the sword without divine authority, and 'they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.'" Carlstadt had by this time fallen into hopeless disgrace; the victim of his own fanatical indiscretions now comes pleading at Luther's door that he intercede with the Elector to protect him. Luther did so, far enough to get a pardon for his offences, but he could no more sit with the doctors at Wittenberg; and now, instead of Dr. Carlstadt, he became a Kemburg herdsman. How bitterly does Luther lament the estrangement of this his early and long constant friend.

During all this time of dissension and madness on

the part of his own following, the attacks of Luther's old enemies became if anything more violent. They heaped upon him maledictions for thus drenching the country in blood; every crime in the calendar, besides that of heresy, was charged to his account; but this was little more than the piping of frogs now; the affair with the peasantry was far more disastrous and distressing.

One hundred thousand poor deluded people had perished in this miserable insurrection, which, had it been carried but a little further, would have stayed the progress of German institutions to time unnamable. During all this terrible struggle, Luther more than ever demonstrated his own exalted manhood; neither prejudice nor ambition stood in his way to a clear and just conception and judgment.

Friendship and flattery were nought if they opposed his inflexible integrity. Right and left he took to task those who urged on the useless conflict, but it was no use; religious excitement with the ignorant people had turned to religious lunacy; so, led on by fanatics and demagogues, they went to fighting and to death. Those who escaped on the field of battle fell afterward under the sword of the executioner.

Up to this period, 1524, Luther had been on friendly terms with Erasmus; Erasmus in turn had admired, although he did not entirely endorse, the German doctor.

In a long letter written this year to Erasmus, Luther urges for more emphatic expression on his part; takes him to task for the middle course he has so long pursued; charges him with pusillanimity, and almost intimates that he has gone over to the adversary. He felt that he needed the help of so powerful an ally as Erasmus, yet even in this letter was pursuing the direct course to his estrangement. In fact, estrangement did follow; and after this, Luther could scarcely find words forcible enough to express his contempt for "that amphibious being, that knave, that very fool who mocks religion." From the Wittenberg pulpit he entreated his hearers to condemn Erasmus.

Erasmus, however, was not alone the object of attack; for it is a singular fact that toward the end of his life he engaged in controversy with nearly all the scholars who had sided with him, and succeeded in estranging most of them from himself. So strong was his passion for discussion that even trivial points would form the premise for eventual antagonism.

It is now that we find him at the meridian of his glory. Up to this period his sceptre had held control over more loyal subjects than any one prince ever counted under his banners; everywhere where people began to learn the value of religious liberty his counsel was awaited; there was no one else to whom they could look.

As yet the principles of the new faith were without codification, nor had any general body been assembled to frame them. Although many of the electors were still nominal adherents of Rome, it is a singular fact that in most cases the succeeding princes were Lutherans. People had become thoroughly transfused with the new principles; some concessions, even, had been granted by the bishops and other ecclesiastics of the Roman church. Had it not been for the impetuous and disastrous action of indiscreet and fanatical leaders, there is little doubt that compromises might have been reached, which in the end would have benefited both parties; but the radical element had destroyed all hope of this. The one first and last article of their creed was opposition to Rome: Luther only sought to supplant old practices and beliefs, now grown vicious, with new, and pure, and exalted principles. That mighty ally of Luther's discussions, the printing-press, carried his words to conquest.

## CHAPTER XIV.

THE AUGSBURG CONFERENCE—DOMESTIC LIFE.

THERE is no word in the whole Roman language for humility; there was none in the Greek till Paul put it there. The splendour of these courts through the historic centuries is almost incomprehensible. Men, to be great, to be powerful, to achieve conquests, whether in letters, or law, or war, must have great fortunes at their backs, courtly influence, and a retinue of vassals.

Rome of the sixteenth century was not at variance with her old traditions; her children, bred through so many generations in the lap of luxury, had become languid and listless; the very atmosphere they breathed had the essence of true manhood all cultivated out of it.

To the north of them the children of Wodin and Thor were growing up, a brawny, broad-shouldered race, in the midst of tangled forests and primitive towns. They were convenient allies, but Rome never anticipated that day when they would throw off

allegiance and stride up in the ranks of civilisation to a foremost place, no more the servant, much less the slave, of emasculation and idle luxury.

They were the offspring of adversity, yet for their vigour and strength of character rose superior to circumstances, and planted their guidons on a territory hitherto deemed consecrated to the children of affluence. The traditions of Rome and Greece were controverted, and these stood aghast at the spectacle of a people rising from obloquy through sheer force of manhood.

Like all the other masters of thought who had preceded him in Germany, Luther was born in poverty, so lived, so laboured, and so died. We are apt to make little note of a man's circumstances when he has other characteristics more prominent, so ample a compensation is richness of manhood for poverty of purse.

In the midst of these absorbing events let us not forget that the most imposing figure of it all is without the concomitant of wealth; he was no Wallenstein, sitting demi-godlike in the midst of enervating luxuries and imposing surroundings.

Through all his career, even in the midst of achievements more remarkable than have been accomplished by any other unaided man, his surroundings were not superior to those of the common people; indeed, he was so pitifully poor that fre-

quently we find him at a loss for means to supply absolute necessities. This was owing in part, however, to his own careless use of what was placed at his disposal. He has been known to give away large amounts of money immediately they were received, leaving his own coffers quite empty. Discharging an old and faithful servant, at a time when his funds were low, he wrote to his wife, "I pray you, give John not less than five florins; if you have it not by you, you may pawn my silver cup, for he is a faithful man, and deserving of all we can do for him." Poor Catherine had reason to regret, years after, this erratic benevolence, when she begged her bread through the streets of Wittenberg. So extended was his reputation for giving, that alms-seekers beset him. His friends urged him to provide for the future, and he could have done so quite liberally; but, shaking his head, he always responded, "*Dominus providebit;*" so went on selling gift after gift to meet wants other than his own, thus assuring poverty for his final years. He even begged his donors to be less lavish with their gifts.

At Augsburg, and Worms, and other places where he had been obliged to appear publicly, his purse was supplied by contributions from wealthy adherents. So absorbed was he by the sanguinary contest that he paid no attention to the wants of his person; friends being watchful for him in this regard, how-

ever, he wanted nothing necessary to comfort and decent appearance.

He had all the tastes and refinements of a man of luxury; the impressions left by that visit to Rome never departed from him; he ardently admired Albert Durer and his works, likewise Lucas Cranach, one of the most prominent and successful painters and engravers of his time. It was he who engraved most of the cartoons which accompany part of Luther's publications, his connection with the court of Elector Frederick bringing him into familiar intercourse with Luther, whose life-long friend he was.

From earliest years, since his childish voice sung under the windows of loving Ursula Cotta, music had been a solace. How many times in the silent night hours, when his soul was in the agonies of uncertainty, were the notes of his flute heard through the gloomy halls of Erfurt monastery! "Oh! what a solace is music," he says, "to the sad and sorrowful mind. I have always loved it, and whoso is skilful in the art hath a good temperament. By music we may drive away Satan and temptation; it is a divine gift to us. It has enabled me to surmount many difficulties, to subdue anxious fears; it is the handmaiden of theology."

In friendship and private life his singular purity and gentleness are in strong contrast with the heroic and menacing character displayed in public con-

troversy. Detractors have sought to stain his reputation with the intimation of monstrous private crimes; but the ampler testimonies of Melancthon, Spalatin, Amsdorf, and others who were very near him, refute these odious insinuations; that the man lived as he believed, no one may question.

During all that grand and awful struggle which sundered the Christian Church, and in which he stood for a long period as the solitary champion, breathing hot and hasty and strong words, there was never a time when the hand of friendship was extended toward him, that he did not grasp it with warm and generous sympathy, and utter words of tenderness between the periods of contention.

That he was a man of remarkable versatility, a genius, in fact, his whole life bears testimony. We know him only as a stern master of men; those who were contemporary with, and lived nearest him, knew him as a man of genuine humour, spontaneously social, ready with song and story to encourage the mirth of those who joined with him. How could it be otherwise; the man of positive austerity is as small and narrow as any other one-sided character. Were Luther always of the character in which we find him when opposed to Eck, then must his projects, many of them, have failed in their accomplishment.

To his mastership he joined a certain valuable

discretion; wrought into the solid substance of his discourses an ingenuity of illustration which disarmed opposition, and won a public jury.

When in the heat of debate he went astray from this principle, his case was prejudiced by virulence and passion. Let us not forget that the same intelligence which dictated "*Ein feste Burg*" dictated also the famous couplet,

> "*Wer nicht liebt Wein, Weib und Gesang*
> *Der bleibt ein Narr sein Leben lang.*"
>
> Who loves not woman, wine, and song,
> Remains a fool his whole life long.

Here is the social, almost the convivial, side of a majestic character, an equipoise of the tragic and serio-comic. So is the potency of scholarship constrained, if it be not adorned with gentle and innocent pleasantries.

He loved the company of his friends, and, in child-like simplicity, spoke and wrote to them such warm and loving words that one might almost doubt his ability to ascend those heights of forensic eloquence which startled the world from its lethargy of centuries, and builded new foundations for progressive thought.

It had been the hope of Luther's father that he should perpetuate the family name, and although he distinctly tells us that he was three times in love, still, up to the third time he maintained his vows of celibacy. Now, in the forty-second year of his age,

he met Catherine von Bora, a sister in the convent of Nemptsch, and was married to her, June 14th, 1525. They went together to live on a small farm which he had purchased at Zeilsdorf; there, with "my Eve, my empress, my rib Ketha," he passed two quiet years, each year bringing him a child, first John, then Elizabeth.

Now, for the first time, we find him relapsing into the querulousness of age. The death of Elector Frederick, coming just now, was a depressing circumstance. Fortunately for Luther, Frederick was succeeded by his brother John, a man not less sagacious, and if anything, more radically Protestant than his excellent predecessor. Though still in the prime of life, Luther was far from being in the prime of strength; the mighty tax so long imposed upon him, coupled with chronic bodily infirmities, was slowly but visibly gaining ascendency. Here on his small estate he divided his time between grubbing in the garden and attending to his correspondence, which was, as ever, voluminous and important. His correspondents were among the most illustrious men of the time; they plied him with questions, and aggravated him with dispute; he was a sort of oracle toward whom the world looked, and for whom it waited, nor was ready to move until he had defined the line to be pursued. Men of Luther's time had come to have great faith in his judgment.

Melancthon prized his letters above all others; he assures us that no man wrote or thought like Luther. He was altogether unique; but his most formidable productions about this time were framed in a tinsel of mingled pleasantry and complaint, which bespoke advancing years.

Occasionally the old fires, which had burned so brilliantly in years gone by, would flash for a moment and then smoulder again. More suffering meets him; poverty, a childish impatience, bodily pains, all came to add a little discomfort.

More children were added to his family, and then came the plague, and carried one away. "I am a mere woman, sick at heart," he says, "since my little daughter Elizabeth died. I could not believe that a man's soul could be filled with such tenderness toward a child.[1]

In 1527 Luther himself was attacked by a long sickness, commencing with apoplexy, and followed by three months of prostration, mental and physical.

During all this time, like a warrior disarmed, he chafes under his own impotence, and the advantages gained by his enemies. Many times he nerved himself for a reply to the Sacramentarians, for whom he could scarce find strong enough words of contempt, then at last, throwing down his pen, he said, "My soul is not capable of this, or anything else;

[1] Luther had six children in all, the last born in 1536.

endeavoured to conciliate him; he had no sympathy with them or their kind, however, and was inflexible in his opposition. There were no disputants to cope with this veteran of the schools. Luther styles them "illiterate rustics, having no power to sustain an argument; zealots only."

This meeting was held at Marburg, year 1529. Nothing satisfactory was accomplished, and Luther congratulated Amsdorf and Melancthon that such was the result.

A few months after this, a meeting of the Protestants was agreed on, to be held at Augsburg, called there by royal decree of Charles V. himself, in order, if possible, to settle the vexed question of the division of the Church.

Luther, being still under imperial condemnation, could not appear. Who now will rise to fill this great vacancy? Elector John, however, took care to have Luther within consulting distance, and conveyed him to the old fortress of Coburg, conveniently near.

Previous to the Augsburg meeting, the Lutheran party met at Torgau; from this point Elector John, accompanied by Luther, Melancthon, Justus Jonas, Spalatin, and Andreas Osiander, with two hundred horsemen, set out for Augsburg.

At Torgau these people had come to an understanding as to what they should do at the confession.

Had Luther been permitted to set foot within the

council chamber, there would doubtless have been hot words, as there always were when he took up the cudgels; now he could only sit there in Coburg Castle, with bridled tongue, to be appealed to as his counsels might be needed. The sceptre of leadership was, by mutual consent, conferred on one person; it fell to the lot of Melancthon.

In all this illustrious company there was only one Melancthon, nor could man be better fitted for the place he was to fill. In his fortress domicile, Luther occasionally breaks forth with some of the old time enthusiasm; it only sparkles for a moment, however, as when he writes, "from the clouds, the empire of birds, residence of the crows," to "my loving Ketha." But the aspiring and inspiring majesty of his own person is departed; disease and work have wasted the substance and the man.

Previous to his arrival at Coburg, he had begun the translation of Æsop's fables, and during his three months' stay here, he added part of the Psalms and many metrical hymns to his work, being assisted by an amanuensis. Inspired by his surroundings and the work before him, he composed that memorable hymn, "*Ein Feste Burg ist user Gott,*" suggested to him by the sixteenth Psalm, both the words and the melody being his own. And this he sung triumphantly within the strong walls of Coburg.

He exhorted the Elector and his friends to be of

good courage. The task before them was one of magnitude; the future depended on it, no one knew for how long. True to their impulses, Melancthon and Spalatin were urging toward conciliation and conservatism. Luther charged upon them in a sharp letter, with the assurance that no such course could be successful: he was equally opposed to the concessions in favour of any of the dissenting bodies, and declaimed against them with much of his old ardour. Here, as at Worms, Eck[1] was the prominent advocate of the Roman party; he found no Luther confronting him, however, but in his place two calm and thoughtful men, in strong contrast with the aggressive leader.

In his stronghold sat Luther, alternately cheering and chiding, joyful at every success, nor faltering when gloom seemed imminent, but singing his hymns, writing his books, and waiting.

The profession of faith of the Protestants, eventually drawn up by Melancthon, with Luther in council, originally agreed upon at Torgau, was presented before the Augsburg body, July 6th, 1530. It was signed by five electors, thirty ecclesiastical princes, twenty-three secular princes, twenty-two abbots, thirty-two counts and barons, and thirty-nine free imperial cities. Luther was exultant; he now beheld the dignified consummation of a long and

[1] Not the famous Dr. John, but the imperial councillor."

laborious contest. Though not all he wished, it was more than he had really expected. Congratulations on the success of the conference were indulged in by all concerned. Even imperial Charles breathed more freely, and he might well do so; for since assuming the crown, his cares had been multifarious, and with few intervals of exemption.

The league of the Protestant princes at Schmalkald, which was formed immediately at the closing of the Augsburg conference, was charged to Luther; he at once wrote, denying the impeachment, and every other which pointed to an opposition to his imperial master, whom he had always treated with the respect becoming his exalted position. Charles, in turn, did not fail to recognise the greatness and importance of Luther and his work. Though his leanings were always towards Rome, whose mandate he executed, he still passes in history as a discreet and dignified monarch.

Among the many foolish things which marked the career of Duke George of Saxony, was his attempted precipitation of an armed contest between the Protestants and the Emperor. With much ostentation, he offered five thousand horse, to be used against the Lutherans. "They seek to win spurs," writes Luther, "by slaughtering our congregations; these brave knights had better be about other business than that of fighting preachers and their flocks."

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE PEASANT WAR—LUTHER'S DEATH.

THE people of Munster, like many others poorly advised, were just now going into excesses unwarrantable and ruinous. Secret assemblies, frequent and long, boded no good for this district. It all ended in fanaticism, bigotry, battles, and death. While they pillaged the public buildings and churches, their cry was "repent, repent." John Mathiesen, their supreme prophet, was another madman: with arquebus and halberd he, by his own hand, laid many low. John of Leyden was another of like character. Not satisfied with being merely a prophet, he proclaimed himself king, and set up a royal establishment, a feeble one that proved too big for its foundation.

This promoter of chaos, like others before him, paid for his foolishness by the forfeit of his life. Luther had much to say about these fanatics, but nothing in their favour. Both the Roman and Lutheran bodies sought the overthrow of the Anabaptists, and accomplished it. The excesses of men

of the Munster stamp were thus far the single features to be deprecated of the Protestant innovation. Doubtless many of those who took part were encouraged to it by Luther's hasty words—words spoken in moments of passion, which in the succeeding calms he was glad to renounce and condemn.

Lunatics thought they heard in them the sound of the tocsin, calling to draw the blood of their enemies, but such they were not meant to be. The new principles had now become too far extended to exist under the domination of one man; indeed, the one man, who by his might had inaugurated the revolution, was now beginning to make much of trifles; had, in fact, lost most of that resolute self-possession which had made him for a time the arbiter of men's thoughts and director of their actions.

His letters now frequently mentioned a decline in strength, and the prospect of dissolution. Partly in sadness, but for the most exultant, he meditates upon the future. Much of his writing that has been preserved after the year 1535 is frivolous and weak; even in theological discussion the minor points are distorted to unnecessary prominence; his playfulness is that of a child. His time was spent mostly now enjoying the society of his friends; indeed, he was their pensioner, being so poor as to be the charge of Lucas Cranach and others who were willing to advance small sums.

As his children advanced in years he devoted much of his time to them. His language in nearly every instance now reflects the working of the mind within; he moralises and meditates; but we must not accept altogether the Table-talk which bears his name; it is the work of many hands, with gratuitous additions and enlargements. However, there is ample and unequivocal documentary material of his own bearing the authoritative imprint.

We may not deem it extraordinary that the words of a man so important to his time were carefully recorded. John Luther, his father, died in May, 1530. "I now am old Luther," writes Martin; "presently I shall follow him to that kingdom which Christ has promised. I do rejoice that he lived long enough to see the light of the new Gospel." Indeed his last years were crowded with sorrow and pain: "I am overwhelmed with age and weariness; old, cold, half-blind, yet am I not permitted to take repose. Lamentations and tears are in vain; I am feeble, and can do nothing but pray, 'Thy will be done.'"

Towards the closing of his life he had become possessed of the idea, then prevalent, that the world was about to come to an end, the day of judgment near at hand. He daily prayed exemption from the pain of further living, grew restless, and sought tranquillity in other places than Wittenberg, toward

which he had conceived an intense dislike. He proposed to his wife that they re-occupy their little Zeilsdorf estate; he was, however, in no condition to live remote from friends, and by their efforts he was induced to return to Wittenberg. His letters at this time to "sweet Catherine, dear Catherine, my most gracious spouse," are full of pitiable tenderness, and so much in contrast with those letters of time gone by, when he was in the thick of the fight, that they scarce seem the promptings of the same heart. But such they were; it was only the sun coming out of the storm as the day was waning.

Notwithstanding his physical weakness, he continued preaching more or less. In 1546, a conference of the Lutherans was held at Eisleben. Luther himself, still anxious to take active part in all these assemblages, by great effort was conveyed thither, and was present at many of the meetings, taking active part in some of them.

To a friend who was with him in his chamber on February 17th, he complained of increasing prostration and suffering, then swooned. Attendants were summoned, and vigorous treatment resorted to; they remained by him till late at night, when he said in Latin, "Into Thy hands I commit my spirit; Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth," then fell into a gentle sleep.

With him at this time were his friends, Count

Albert and his wife, Aurifaber, Dr. Jonas, and two physicians. Awaking from his sleep, he observed the anxious faces about him, and knowing well the cause, arose from his couch and slowly paced the room for a few moments. Dr. Jonas expressed the hope that he would soon feel easier. "No, dear Jonas," replied the sufferer, "I am even worse; I grow cold; I have nothing wholesome about me;" then in the midst of his chamber he fell upon his knees and uttered the following prayer:—"O my God! Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, source of all consolation, I thank Thee for having revealed unto me Thy well-beloved Son in whom I believe; whom I have sought to make known to all the people, and acknowledged before them, that they might be led to Thee; whom I do love and celebrate; and whom the Pope and infidels do persecute. I commend my soul unto Thee, O my Lord Jesus Christ; I am about to quit this body, I am about to quit this life, but I know that I shall abide eternally with Thee. *In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum; redemisti me, Domine Deus veritatis.*" Three times he repeated the last sentence, then fell back insensible.

In a few moments, however, through the efforts of his friends, he was aroused from his stupor, and Dr. Jonas asked him, "Reverend Father, do you die firmly professing the faith you have taught?" "He

looked for a moment on the little company, then with emphasis answered, "Yes." His eyes closed; this was the last word he uttered. So died Martin Luther. So dawned the new day over Christendom.

Could good old Master Trebonius now arise from his long rest for a moment, he would have even more faith in the virtue of taking off his hat before his schoolboys. Here was one more illustrious than any he had apprehended. Not a chancellor nor any other titled officer of State, but by Divine right the peer of them all.

Yet this remarkable man never voluntarily journeyed three leagues from his birthplace. As a child under parental direction, he was sent to school at Eisenach and Erfurt; as the representative of his vicar-general, he journeyed to Rome, by command; as an agitator and dissenter, he was conveyed to Augsburg and Worms by imperial order. Other than this, his home and his labouring-place was in the forest, remote from populous centres, and beforetime not distinguished particularly. Dead now, almost under shadow of the roof which sheltered him at birth.

Contrast him with a group of his contemporaries, Erasmus, Reuchlin, Copernicus, Durer: all travellers, and men conversant, more or less, with other than their native provinces; among them Luther stands singularly alone, just as he stood in the midst of that august assembly at Worms.

But contrast did not dwarf the proportions of this man; his influence was illimitable, his intellectual proportions such that they commanded the deference of his most implacable enemies. From the first a striver, familiar with vicissitude, he had developed a degree of resoluteness that approached belligerency, which, though often repulsive, was quite as often effective; the love of old domination, inherent in the German character, was not easily subjected by gentle reasoning.

In the heraldic record his father's coat of arms was a hammer upon a block of granite: though the son had little use for a distinction of this sort, it was nevertheless eminently appropriate. Sincerity, substance, solidity, were essential parts in his composition. Fame and applause he put behind him, thus avoiding the sunken rocks upon which fictitious philanthropy wrecks itself. In the days of his utmost importance, egotism and arrogance never marred the symmetry of his character; inherently great, he could afford to be free of that ostentation which marks ephemeral distinction.

Conscious as he may have been of the vastness of his influence, yet there was no pause between his periods in order to observe the effect of what he said. Luther had one pre-eminent purpose in view; to that with unabated energy he bent the whole force of his life—would have done more, he said, had he "the rich

eloquence and treasury of expression of Erasmus, the Grecian lore of Camerarius, a knowledge of the Hebrew equal to Forscher;" but who of this illustrious company did so much? Even Erasmus, who had been the target for many of Luther's keenest criticisms, bears generous testimony to this man whose "private life was universally commended, and whose enemies cannot find subject-matter for calumniation."

Germany as Luther found it, and Germany as Luther left it, presents us strong contrasts. It was in spite of, not by the aid of, foreign influence, that the important change had been effected.

The so-called culture which had transfused itself through the courts of Rome and France was disastrous to both; dilettant atmosphere, heavy with artificial perfumes, bred contempt for that rustic manhood which so vigorously and effectively asserted itself. The men who were first in the field and laboured most resolutely gathered the sheaves.

Luther and his followers were industrious; Rome held to the anchorage of her ancient traditions, confident that she would outride the storm without dismemberment. Until now, Germany had been the humble servitor, but her children, lusty and vigorous alike in body and mind, had grown into some knowledge of independence, and could no longer remain merial. No one else would do it for her, so she put

herself forward in the scale of civilisation. It was a formidable undertaking, the measure of which we of a more enlightened age can scarcely comprehend. That Rome maintained her supremacy through these many centuries by her superiority of intelligence must be admitted. Had it not been for the introduction of vicious men and obnoxious practices, she might have maintained her place many years longer—how many no one can say, for intelligence is the superior foe of tyranny, and the suddenness with which men's eyes were opened in that eventful time was one of those marvellous episodes of history which cannot be explained. The grander implements of this revolution were all of humble origin. The feeble, lonely voice of Tauler, preaching to the herdsmen in the mountain solitudes; Luther, Melancthon, Erasmus—none, by birth or title, above the common people—coming out of that mysterious obscurity which surprises us so often by the munificence and magnitude of its gifts, assuming wondrous charges, accomplishing magnificent results, and leaving us in amazement. So passed Martin Luther.

Melancthon, who probably enjoyed a closer intimacy with Luther than many of his friends, says, "whoever knew him and his habits will agree that he was an admirable man, soft and genial in his moments of companionship, not dogmatic nor loving disputes."

This last may in truth be so, for Luther became *entangled* in "disputes," did not measure carefully the weight and importance of what he asserted, but having once asserted was bound to maintain, for he was a man with "a passion for truth," and would get at it, though it cost him many hard struggles and sacrifices. Obduracy and harshness, which characterised him in much that he said, came partly from his training, but more from intensity of conviction.

There is no need to analyse this character; we cannot tell by what force men arrive at such magnificent conclusions. That is a problem which the philosophers of history have never solved. Of all our historic names, no single one ever exerted an influence so broad and lasting as that of Martin Luther. The revolution which he inaugurated still progresses; the Christian world goes on divided. Perhaps it need not have been so; at all events it is so. That single united body of Christians which recognised Rome as its head, was doubtless the most intelligent, the strongest coalition of men the world ever saw. That it could have been disintegrated by the efforts of one man is something remarkable. We may go on explaining it all, still the presence of that superior manhood confronts us; unerring, resolute, fearless, he flung back the gates that resisted John Huss, and through them men are walking to this day.

# CHAPTER XVI.

## POST-LUTHERAN GERMANY.

IN this sixteenth century the theory of the universe was resolved by a German; the occupations of scribes and missal writers became supernumerary through the ingenuity of a German. Still another of like blood had before this presented the world with that potent civiliser, gunpowder, which took the place of the sword to precede the Bible and the missionary. Each one of these progressive steps was opposed by the regnant church; but awakening intelligence recognised no obstacle, it went steadily forward, creating and improving; from alchemy to chemistry, from astrology to astronomy, from baseless theories to experimental proof.

Nature was beginning to testify in her own behalf, and it was no easy matter for the fathers and the councils to surrender that ancient and responsible prerogative of the final solution of all these enigmas, according to their own notions. Hereafter they will have little to do except to issue their formal

"*damnatio*" against heretical experimenters and their sacrilegious productions.[1]

Not less important in this procession is the philological feature of this century. Before this, the domain of letters was occupied by two languages only; books were few, and scholars of various tongues could here meet on common ground; behind this curtain, too, the courts communed, and plebeian people could only look silently on, albeit their endorsement and support was demanded when it came to the pinch. From the councils, through the preachers, it had gone out to the commonalty that books, and literature of all sorts, were dangerous things, fit only for those who were instructed to read. The layman was only a private in a vast army, to be guided and governed by superiors. Even had it been otherwise, an open book accessible to all, it was in Latin, and priceless; to those who were floundering about in a confusion of tongues it was useless.

In such an age, and under such conditions, Rome grew to her second splendour. The traditions of past superiority lingered with present generations;

[1] Opposition to scientific investigation has ever been a fundamental principle of the Christian Church. The opposition shown by the Protestant Church came by inheritance from the fathers, back in the middle ages. The spirit which condemns investigation and deduction now is the same that invoked the wrath of Heaven on Copernicus and Galileo.

there was a pride that Christian civilisation should exceed the glory of the past, that temples of the living God should exceed in magnificence the temples of mythology, that the stones of early Christendom should live as a perpetual monument to the triumph of Christ.

With what unanimous alacrity Christians, the world over, entered upon this undertaking, we have ample evidence. Travellers through all time will go to Rome to see what their fellow-men have done in ages past—something that never can be accomplished again by like means. Self-respect grows with intelligence; luxury and achievement can no longer be confined to the few; that morning star that arose clear and bright early in the sixteenth century, *the consciousness of ignorance*, was the first hopeful gleaming of emancipation from a thraldom more complete than men have ever since been subject to. Rome strove hard to hold fast that ancient superiority of intellect, of judgment, of power, which, by unanimous consent, was hers. Here was the basilica where all might worship, here the treasure-house toward which flowed the wealth of the faithful; but all the wisdom of her counsellors, and all the power of her majestic courts, could not bid back the oncoming of the day.

In the same century both Germany and England set about the labour of the establishment of their

languages; in both localities the project was resolutely opposed by the schools and men of letters. The scholar's domain was a *terra incognita* to all except those who were licensed to venture there; the dictation of the schools was scarcely less arbitrary than Governmental dictation. The schools got all their books and all their interpretations from the codex accepted by the rulers at Rome, hence scholarship itself was within limits, there was no breadth of research, no individual speculation, no liberty. Consternation came when Wittenberg appealed from the oracle at Rome to the plain teachings of sacred Scripture; more consternation when the horn-books of Erasmus stirred the ambitions of men to search a little in that hitherto mysterious domain; but, with the facilities offered by the printing press, their promulgation was rapid and irresistible.

Whatever is likely to augment the prosperity and welfare of men is eagerly seized by them; so these books, although proscribed and confiscated wherever found, were read and treasured in secret. To this day they are discovered in unexpected places, where they have been concealed and protected by former owners. Intelligent men are safe without law; *per contra*, intelligent men are quick to distinguish and resist any curtailment of their privileges by the law. We see the middle ages as a dark and dangerous period; the manners and expedients of that time are

offensive to our civilisation; but there were good men and heroes then, though perhaps, if we knew them as well as we know our own, we would respect them as little. Men grow greater and better in our estimation as time increases the distance between them and us, when they are too far away for us to distinguish their defects. The badness and goodness of our own time will be equally magnified hereafter.

That the men who were most actively engaged in this crisis of transformation were not of our standard, does not affect the value or proportions of their work; they were men with impulses like ours, but without our facilities for getting at the truth of things. To these men it became obvious that fist-law was no law; also, that laws were useless unless they could be comprehended; and to this end the assembled princes required the young Charles, at the time of his election, to sign such conditions as had never before been thought of. They were, in substance, that without the assent of the princes the emperor should make no alliance, nor project any war with a foreign nation. He should introduce no foreign troops into the empire, nor hold any diets beyond its limits. That Germans alone should fill the offices of Germany, and that *the affairs of the empire should be conducted in either the German or the Latin language.* There were other articles providing against the sequestration of

estates by the crown, also defending it from the demands and embarrassments imposed by intriguing capital.

This paper was laid before Charles at a critical time. Frederick of Saxony, manly and sagacious Frederick, was the real choice of the princes, and these conditions simply implied, "sign this, or we put the Saxon Elector in the place," so Charles, with ambition for more crowns than he already wore, and relying on the statement of his advisers that the paper was of little effect, inasmuch as his assumption of the crown gave him arbitrary power, agreed to the conditions. Charles was young, and his counsellors (they were Spaniards, bred to an indifference to sacred promises, and careless as to integrity) failed to appreciate the sincerity and earnestness of the princes who drew up the requirements. Such was the foundation of civil and religious liberty in Germany—Germany, ruled by a native, counselled by natives in the native tongue, that was a bold, strong step toward independence—the birth of the empire of to-day.

Maximilian I., lately dead, had laid the foundation for this happy circumstance; by prudence and a patriotic foresight which convinced him of a majestic future for Germany, his only thought and ambition had been to set her steadily in the way of getting there. All along, her heroes had been ready with their lives and their fortunes fighting the battles of

others; to the remotest parts of the hemisphere the Germans had become renowned for manliness and bravery as soldiers; as a subjective force they were of infinite value to the Holy See. The rapidity with which she released herself from the last vestiges of barbarism and dependence during the auspicious reign of Charles V. is historic. From the year of our Lord 1500, through half the century, each year was a record of steady progress. In the fifteenth century her arts were crude, her architecture advancing little beyond the hard Roman original; she was without laws or law-makers, vast in territory and people, but subject to other than her own rulers. The weak were oppressed by the strong and opulent lords, who levied at large upon the goods of those who came upon their domain.

Such was essentially the condition of things when the child Martin Luther romped in the shade of the Thuringian forest. Intestine wars and foreign entanglements obstructed the good-will of Maximilian toward the country which he ruled. Only a few years before, the ashes of Huss and Jerome of Prague had floated down the Rhine. Bohemian blood was still at the boiling point, and kept so by the remembrance of many persecutions; she was ready at the word to resort to extremes against her oppressors. Relief came at last; not by the sword, but through the schools.

In 1486, the venerable Albert of Brandenburg, called Achilles, sat before the younger princes and counselled them as to the selection of a king. He was a man of many battles, and such valour as commanded the respect of all. In his heart he had the hope of a new future near at hand; so he told the juniors in earnest and eloquent words. The Roman Empire was waiting for a king at the hands of this assembly, and now for the first time it dawned upon them that, as Rome ruled them, Germany might as well rule Rome. After due deliberation, the choice fell upon the son of their own Frederick III., Maximilian. Under Frederick, the feudal system had rather prospered; Maximilian had promised that he would make every effort to combat these conditions and insure the peace of Germany. It was a shrewd and successful piece of diplomacy. Before the veteran warrior, Albert, closed his eyes, he had the satisfaction of beholding the morning star of the new era. The establishment of imperial courts of justice and registry, coherent laws governing the hitherto irregular diets, all pointed towards an advancing civilisation.

These diets—since become the *Reichstag*, or parliamentary body of the German government—were then composed of three elements or colleges: the electors, the princes, and the cities. Although arbitrary in power, they were convened and prorogued by imperial ukåse, *pro re nata*, for extraordinary purposes, hence

their effectiveness as a deliberative body was limited by the imperial will.

The diets of the latter part of the fifteenth century were the first to show a disposition to break away from former usages; little more than half-a-century later we find them making demands, taking exceptions to the rulings of the monarch, proposing new measures; this was far astray from the old way.

At Worms, the politicians felt assured of a strong popular support, and did not hesitate much to take the aggressive. Charles himself had been informed by Aleander and others that the German people were united on the Lutheran question, and to preserve his crown, if not the head under it, he must show them some concessions; they argued that, in after-time, matters could be righted by force. But the after-time was not a time of retreat; the progressive party grew in strength, pushed forward by books and book-makers, and having once tasted the privileges of free government, they sprung suddenly into an atmosphere of independence.

Intoxicated by their apparent triumphs, they went headlong to dangerous extremes; some leaders became monomaniacs, and that condition in times of peril is infectious, so others followed them. It was not a long, slow contest, but quick, decisive, and disastrous, with a period put to it by burning pincers and the glowing dagger. The palings in the market

places have been capped by no ghastly heads since that time; reason and decency came with increasing intelligence. Madmen who shook their swords in the faces of princes, and princes who put the heel of oppression upon the helpless, were condemned alike; the middle passage was the safe one, and resolute men, with unfaltering hope and an unselfish love for Germany, were seeking to guide her safely to a secure place. It was not an undertaking, it grew spontaneously; all the elements of civilisation converged here, diplomacy availed itself of them as invaluable allies, religion saw in them the foundations for a more intelligent faith, while the arts and sciences grew with unwonted rapidity under their nurture and encouragement.

It was new life for all. Those who had watched hopefully for its coming through the medium of courts and councils were not looking in the right direction. Nearly all the grand actors who have left their names to us as principals in this drama came out of obscurity, from the meanest quarter, the homes of the rustics and peasantry. Kings and noblemen were there by inheritance, these other men were there by Divine right; every step forward with them was an inspiration; though opposed by the formidable and formal processes of recognised powers, they only halted for a moment to give heed; the work went steadily on.

When Charles V. had cut his way with the sword into Wittenberg, standing by the grave of Luther, and his obsequious attendants proposed to dig up the useless bones and submit them to contempt and the pyre, he rebuked them with the words, "We war not with the dead, but with the living. Let him repose in peace; he has already found a Judge." At the same time, learning that the Lutheran form of worship had been proscribed by his officers, Charles turned upon them with a demand to know by what authority this was done. "Whence has it proceeded? If it be in our name that the service of God has been interdicted here, then does it incur our high displeasure. We have altered naught touching religious matters in high Germany, why should we do so here?"

Charles had not forgotten the warrant he signed at Augsburg years before, and the people of North Germany had impressed him favourably, notwithstanding the prejudices encouraged by his Spanish attendants. There was German blood enough in his veins to inspire him with a noble magnanimity; he did not propose to torture those who were at his mercy, although through the treachery and intrigue of his following many were made to suffer.

At the time of Luther's death the Roman party was exultant, under the impression that the removal of the great head of the Reformation would expedite their conquest of his following; they were not philo-

sophic enough to see that the principles of Luther had become infused into the body of the people, and that, once having seen the light of liberty, darkness was ever afterward abominable. Excommunication, which had been regarded as an irreparable misfortune, was now a matter of little consequence.

The literature of Germany advanced rapidly during the twenty or thirty years that preceded Luther's death. Thinking men drew inspiration from the labours of Erasmus and Reuchlin. Ulrich von Hutten, fired by the prospect of a free Germany, uttered those satires which made him famous, and which eventually forced him to a safe retreat elsewhere; but he did not cease his exultation. The Suabian, Sebastian Frank, followed him, but his work was of different tenor. Johann Fischart was another whose wrath was stirred by those who obstructed German progress. In prose and poetry, with much wit, he did for his time and country what Butler did in English.

This century of German letters, the sixteenth, culminated in Jacob Boehme, philosopher and mystic. Like others of his time, coming from singular rural obscurity, to his twelfth year the only book that he studied from was that one thrown open before him while watching cattle in the fields about Görlitz. Notwithstanding this, a few years later he stood at the head of the German philosophers of his time.

The schools looked on in contemptuous amazement to see individuals wielding the weapons hitherto exclusively their own. That men were to be invested with the privilege of thinking for themselves was distasteful to them; such, nevertheless, was the inevitable result. Thereafter, the august professors had nought to do but to prepare the youthful minds; there were no more illustrious truth-seekers sitting at the feet of this oracle, the gowns of the doctors had lost their ancient significance.

Although Martin Luther's activity was in the main confined to one feature of this progressive movement, it had a potential effect over all. To him more than to any other man belonged the credit. In the face of mighty odds, obstructed by everything that was likely to neutralise his labour, he still persisted. When other men faltered, he put spurs to jaded energy and pressed forward.

Others were found ready to follow this hardy plebeian, but *he* was always in the lead, and when he died, the momentum of the advance had become so great that no finite power could restrain it. Mandates from thrones and councils were of no avail. Germany had moved to a higher plane.

# APPENDIX.

## COPY OF AN INDULGENCE IN THE COMMON FORM.

"OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST have mercy on thee, N. N., and absolve thee, by the merits of His most holy sufferings! And I, in virtue of the apostolic power committed to me, absolve thee from all ecclesiastical censures, judgments, and penalties that thou mayest have merited; and further, from all excesses, sins, and crimes that thou mayest have committed, however great and enormous they may be, and of whatever kind, even though they should be reserved to our holy father, the Pope, and to the Apostolic See. I efface all the stains of weakness, and all traces of the shame that thou mayest have drawn upon thyself by such actions. I remit the pains that thou wouldst have had to endure in purgatory. I receive thee again to the Sacrament of the Church. I hereby re-incorporate thee in the communion of the saints, and restore thee to the innocence and purity of thy baptism; so that, at the moment of death, the gate of the place of torment shall be shut against thee, and the gate of paradise and joy shall be opened unto thee. And, if thou shouldst live long, this grace continueth unchangeable, till the time of thy end.

"In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

"The brother, John Tetzel, Commissary, hath signed this with his own hand."

## LUTHER'S THESES IN BRIEF.

When our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, says, "Repent," He means that the whole life of His followers on earth shall be a constant and continual repentance; yet internal repentance is of no avail if it does not produce external mortification of the flesh. True penitence—repentance of and grief for sin—will end only when a man passes from this life to the life eternal.

The Pope can remit no other penalty than that which he has himself imposed. He cannot remit any condemnation, save to declare and confirm the remission that God has made, unless the sin be committed against himself.

The laws of ecclesiastical penance should be imposed only on the living, and in no respect concern the dead.

No man can be delivered from punishment and saved by the Pope's indulgence. The Pope has no more power over purgatory in the church at large than every bishop has in his own diocese, and every vicar in his own parish. Besides, who knows whether all the souls in purgatory desire to be redeemed? They say St. Severinus did not.

It is false, that the moment the money sounds at the bottom of the strong box, the soul flies away out of purgatory; but it is true, that as soon as this sound is heard, avarice and the love of gain spring up, increase, and multiply.

They teach false doctrines, who assert that there is no need of contrition or repentance to deliver a soul from purgatory, or to buy an indulgence.

Every Christian who feels true penitence for his sins, receives a full pardon, without need of letter of indulgence; and every true Christian, living or dead, has part in all the good things of Christ or of the church, by the gift of God.

Still we must not despise the Pope's pardon, regarded as a declaration of God's pardon.

True repentance seeks and loves chastisement; but the pleasantness of indulgence makes one hate chastisement.

The Pope does not wish us to consider buying an indulgence as an act of mercy. He who gives to the poor and needy does better than he who buys an indulgence; for the work of charity makes a man more pious, while the purchase of an indulgence only makes him more confident in himself, and self-secure from punishment.

He who sees his neighbour in want, and instead of ministering to his needs, spends his money for an indulgence, does not buy the Pope's indulgence, but brings upon himself the wrath of God.

If a man have nothing superfluous, it is his duty to care for his own family rather than to spend his money for indulgences.

To buy an indulgence is a free-will act, and not one by command.

The Pope's indulgence is good, if one does not put one's trust in it but very pernicious if it cause the loss of piety.

If the Pope knew of the extortions of the indulgence preachers, he would rather the Metropolitan Church of St. Peter were

burnt and reduced to ashes, than to see it built with the skin, the flesh, and the bones of his sheep.

The change of the canonical penalty into the purgatorial is a tare, a darnel of dissension; the bishops were evidently asleep when this pernicious plant was sown.

The Pope must certainly desire, that if things so trivial as these pardons are celebrated with a bell, a ceremony, a solemnity, a thing so great as the Gospel should be preached with a hundred bells, a hundred ceremonies, a hundred solemnities.

The true treasure of the church is the Gospel of the glory and grace of God. Many have reason to hate this, for by it the first become the last; while many have reason to love the treasure of the indulgences, for by them the last become the first.

The treasures of the Gospel are the nets with which they fish for men of worth; the treasures of the indulgences are the nets with which they fish for men worth money.

To say that the cross placed on the arms of the Pope is equivalent to the cross of Christ, is blasphemy.

Why does not the Pope, in his very holy character, at once release all souls from purgatory? This would be but bestowing his power far more worthily, than for him to deliver a few souls for money, and that money to be used for a building. Money so gained brings calamity with it. What is this strange compassion of God and of the Pope, which, for so many crowns, changes the soul of an impious wretch, an enemy of God and man, into a soul holy and agreeable to the Lord?

Cannot the Pope build a single church for the Metropolitan Cathedral with his own money, rather than to use that of impoverished Christians? for his riches exceed the most enormous accumulations elsewhere.

What does the Pope remit to those who, by their complete repentance, have already purchased a right to full remission?

Fie on the prophets who say to Christ's people: The cross! the cross! and show us not the cross.

Fie on the prophets who say to Christ's people: Peace! Peace! and give us not peace.

Christians must be taught to follow Christ, their chief, through pain and punishment, even through hell itself, that they may thus be assured that it is through tribulations heaven is entered, and not through security and peace.

The dogmatical theses sent out by Luther at about the same time were:—

It is not in the course of nature for man to desire God to be

God. He would rather himself be God, and that God were not God.

It is false that the appetite is free to go as it will in the two senses; it is not free, but captive.

There is not in nature, in the presence of God, anything but concupiscence.

It is false that this concupiscence may be regulated by the virtue of hope; for hope is contrary to charity, which seeks and desires that only which is of God. Hope does not proceed from our merits, but from our passions, which efface our merits.

The best, the infallible preparation and sole disposition for receiving grace, is the choice and predestination decreed by God from all eternity.

On the part of man, nothing precedes grace but the non-disposition to grace, or rather rebellion.

It is false that invincible ignorance can be put forward as an excuse. The ignorance of God, of oneself, of good works, is the invincible nature of man.

### *Extract from Luther's Sermon on All Saints Sunday, after publication of the Theses: Hazlitt's Translation.*

"Even though the Church should really declare that indulgences efface sins better than works of satisfaction, it were a thousand times fitter for a Christian not to buy them, but rather to do the work of repentance, and suffer the penalties; for the indulgences are, and can only be, dispensations from good works, and from salutary penalties. It were far better and surer to give what you can spare towards the construction of St. Peter's, than to buy the indulgences preached for that purpose. But, first of all, if you have to spare, you should give it to your poor neighbour—that is better than to give it to raise up stone walls; and if there be no one in your neighbourhood who requires your assistance, then give it to the churches of your own town. If any then remain, give it to St. Peter, and not before. My desire, my prayer, and my advice is, that you buy not these indulgences. Leave it to bad, idle, sleepy churchmen to buy them; you can dispense with them. Whether men can be drawn from purgatory by the efficacy of indulgences, I cannot say; but I do not believe they can. Some doctors say they can; but they cannot prove it, and the church says nothing about the matter; and at all events, the surest way is to have recourse to prayer. What I teach is true—is founded on Scripture. Let the scholastic doctors keep to their scholastics; all of

them put together are not enough to warrant a preaching up of indulgences. The indulgences, instead of preaching expiation, leave the Christian in the mire of sin. If we are not allowed to say anything against indulgences, there ought not to be so much said about their efficacy. They that preach up indulgences make fools of you; they are not looking after your salvation, but after your pennies. Let some charitably charge me with heresy, because I have told out truths that do harm to their shop; what care I for their brawling? Empty pates, that never opened the Bible, who know nothing of the doctrines of Christ, or even about themselves, and are ever groping in the dark. God give them understanding."

### *Luther's Letter to the Nobles.*

Hazlitt's Translation from Michelet.

"To His Imperial Majesty and the Christian nobility of the German Nation, Martin Luther wishes grace and the strength of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"The Romanists have skilfully raised around them three walls, by means of which they have hitherto protected themselves against all reform, to the great detriment of Christianity and Christendom. First, they pretend that the spiritual power is above temporal power; next, that to the Pope alone it appertains to interpret the Bible; third, that the Pope alone has the right to convoke a council.

"God aid us and give us one of those trumpets which heretofore overthrew the walls of Jericho, that we may level with the ground these walls of straw and paper, expose to full light the tricks and lies of the devil, and recover, by penitence and amendment, the grace of God. Let us begin with the first wall.

"First wall.—All Christians are of spiritual condition, and there is among them no difference but that which results from the difference of their functions, according to the word of the apostle (1 Cor. xii.), 'The body is one, and hath many members; but the body is not one member, but many.'

"We have all the same baptism, the same gospel, the same faith, and we are all equal in our capacity of Christians. It should be with the spiritual minister as it is with the civil magistrate, who, during the exercise of his functions, is above his fellow-citizens, but on resigning his office, becomes as he was before, merely one among them. Indelible characters are a chimera. The secular power being constituted by God for

the purpose of punishing the wicked and protecting the good, its ministrations should extend over all Christians, without consideration of any person whatever, pope, bishop, monk, nun, or what not. If a priest is killed, the whole district is put under interdict. Why not just the same when a poor peasant has been murdered?

"Whence such a difference between Christians, whom Jesus Christ calls equals? The distinction arises simply and solely from laws and human inventions.

"Second wall.—We are all priests. Does not the Apostle (1 Cor. ii.) say, 'He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet He himself is judged of no man'? We have all one mind in the faith, says the gospel elsewhere; why, then, should we not feel, as well as the popes, who are often infidels, what is conformable, what is contrary to the faith?

"Third wall.—The first councils were not convoked by the popes. That of Nicæa itself was convoked by the Emperor Constantine. When a town is surprised by the enemy, the honour is to him who first of all cries to arms, whether he be burgomaster or not. Why should not the same be the case with reference to him who, a watchful sentinel against our infernal enemies, should be the first to see them advance, and the first to assemble Christians against them? Must he needs be pope to do this? Let the Pope put an end to the preposterous luxury with which he is surrounded, and make an approach to the poverty of Jesus Christ. His court swallows up enormous sums. It has been calculated that more than three hundred thousand florins are sent off every year from Germany to Rome. Twelve cardinals would be amply sufficient for all purposes, and the Pope ought to maintain them. Why should the Germans permit themselves to be despoiled by cardinals, who monopolise all the rich preferments, and spend the revenue at Rome? The French do not suffer it. Let us not give another farthing to the Pope as subsidies against the Turks; the whole thing is a snare, a miserable pretext for the purpose of draining us of more money. Let us no longer recognise his right to investiture. Rome draws everything into her bag by the most impudent chicanery. There is one man in that city, a mere courtier, who alone possesses twenty-two benefices, seven priories, and forty-four prebends. Let the secular authority henceforward abstain from sending to Rome the annates it has been in the habit for the last hundred years of sending. Let it be sufficient, for the installation of bishops, that they be confirmed by the two nearest bishops, or by their archbishops, conformably with the enactment of the Council of Nicæa.

"My only object in writing this, is to afford matter for confirmatory reflection to those who are disposed to aid the German nation in becoming once more Christian and once more free, after the deplorable government it has suffered at the hands of the Antichrist, the Pope. . . . Let there be fewer pilgrimages to Italy. . . . Let the mendicant orders become extinct; they have degenerated, and no longer fulfil the intentions of their founders. . . . Let us permit priests to marry. . . . It will be well to suppress a great proportion of the saints' days, and make them coincident with Sundays. . . . The celebrating the festivals of patron saints is prejudicial to society. Let fast days be put an end to. There are many things which may have been desirable under other circumstances and in other times, which are far worse than useless now. Let mendicity be extinguished, by each parish being bound to take charge of its own poor. It will be good to prohibit the foundation of private masses. The doctrine of the Bohemians should be enquired into more impartially and fully than has yet been done. And we might, with good effect, unite with them in resisting the Court of Rome. Let the decretals be abolished. Let the houses for prostitution be suppressed.

"I have another song in my head upon Rome and the Romanists: if their ears itch for it, they shall have it, to the very last octave. Dost thou hear me, Pope of Rome? Thou art the greatest sinner of all; thy throne is not suspended from heaven, but fixed to the gate of hell. Who gave thee power to set thyself above thy God, and trample under feet His precepts and commandments?

" . . . Poor Germans that we are, we have been deceived! We were born to be masters, and we have been compelled to bow the head beneath the yoke of our tyrants, and to become slaves. Name, title, ensigns of royalty, we possess all these; force, power, right, liberty, all these have gone over to the Popes, who have robbed us of them. For them the grain, for us the straw. It is time we should cease to content ourselves with the mere image of empire; it is time we resume the sceptre, and with the sceptre our body, and our soul, and our treasure; it is time the glorious Teutonic people should cease to be the puppet of the Roman Pontiff. Because the Pope crowns the Emperor, it does not follow that the Pope is superior to the Emperor. Samuel, who crowned Saul and David, was not above these kings, nor Nathan above Solomon, whom he consecrated. Let the Emperor, then, be a veritable Emperor, and no longer allow himself to be stripped of his sword or of his sceptre!"

*Extract from a Discourse on the Spiritual Advantages arising from the furtherance of Schools, and the injury consequent on the neglect of them.*[1]

"I will say nothing here of how fine a pleasure it is for a man to be learned, albeit he have never an office; so that he can read all manner of things by himself at home, talk and converse with learned people, travel and act in foreign lands. For peradventure there be few who will be moved by such delights. But seeing thou art so bent upon mammon and victual, look here and see how many and how great goods God has founded upon schools and scholars, so that thou shalt no more despise learning and art by reason of poverty.

"Behold! emperors and kings must have chancellors and scribes, counsellors, jurists, and scholars. There is no prince but he must have chancellors, jurists, counsellors, scholars, and scribes; so likewise all counts, lords, cities, castles, must have syndics, city clerks, and other learned men; nay, there is not a nobleman but must have a scribe.

"Reckon up, now, how many kings, princes, counts, lords, cities, towns, &c. Where will they find learned men three years hence? seeing that here and there already a want is felt.

"Truly, I think kings will have to become jurists, and princes chancellors; counts and lords will have to become scribes, and burgomasters sacristans.

"Therefore, I hold that never was there a better time to study than now; not only for the reason that the art is now so abundant and so cheap, but also because great wealth and honour must needs ensue, and they that study now will be men of price; insomuch that two princes and three cities shall tear one another for a single scholar. For look above or around thee, and thou wilt find that innumerable offices wait for learned men before ten years will have sped; and that few are being educated for the same.[2]

"Besides honest gain, they have, also, honour. For chancellors, city clerks, jurists, and people in office, must sit with those who are placed on high, and help, counsel, and govern. And

[1] In nearly every lengthy discourse Luther had something to say concerning the advantages of learning. He lost no opportunity to impress upon the minds of his listeners, that it not only afforded a source for endless enjoyments, but also conferred a certain power which was obtainable by no other means.

[2] He forecasts the future of Germany, looking to that time when *every* office in the land should be occupied by natives.

they, in fact, are lords of this world, although they are not so in respect of person, birth, and rank.[1]

"Solomon himself mentions that a poor man once saved a city, by his wisdom, against a mighty king. Not that I would have, herewith, warriors, troopers, and what belongs to strife done away, or despised and rejected. They also, when they are obedient, help to preserve peace and all things with their fist. Each has his honour before God, as well as his place and work.

"I have heard of the worthy and beloved Emperor Maximilian, how, when the great boobies complained that he employed so many writers for missions and other purposes, he is reported to have said, 'What shall I do? They will not suffer themselves to be used in this way, therefore I must employ writers.' And further: 'Knights I can create, but doctors I cannot create.' So have I likewise heard of a fine nobleman, that he said, 'I will let my son study. It is no great art to hang two legs over a steed and be a rider; he shall soon learn me that; and he shall be fine and well spoken.[2]

"They say, and it is true, the Pope was once a pupil too. Therefore, despise me not the fellows who say, '*panem propter Deum*' before the doors, and sing the bread-song.[3] Thou hearest, as this psalm says, great princes and lords sing. I, too, have been one of these fellows, and have received bread at the houses, especially at Eisenach, my native city. Although, afterward, my dear father maintained me, with all love and faith, in the high school at Erfurt, and, by his sore sweat and labour, has helped me to what I have become—still I have been a beggar at the doors of the rich, and, according to this psalm, have attained so far by means of the pen, that now I would not compound with the Turkish emperor, to have his wealth and forego my art. Yea, I would not take for it the wealth of the world many times multiplied; and yet, without doubt, I had

[1] To sit with the learned doctors and Hellenists was then an honour and a privilege allowed to few. Those who could not, were taught to respect those who could. At the marriage of Melancthon, Luther's father sat with the Doctors, so we may safely reason that the blood of the great reformer was not without the inheritance of an ambition for learning.

[2] So was the decline of feudalism slowly being effected by the infusion of more noble ambitions. Slowly, but surely, the knights of the arena were being unhorsed by those unarmed knights who forced the conquest of Worms, and, at last, of Christendom.

[3] This was the song sung by Luther under the windows of Ursula Cotta's house. Each verse ended with the words "*panem propter Deum.*" It was in common use by the little suppliants for a long period, so was known as the bread-song.

never attained to it, had I not chanced upon a school, and the writer's trade.

"Yea, sayest thou, though it be fitting and necessary to have schools, of what use is it to teach the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew tongues, and other fine arts? Could we not teach, *in German, the Bible* and God's Word, which are sufficient for salvation? Answer —Yes, I know, alas! too well, that we Germans must always be, and continue, beasts and wild animals.[1] So the surrounding nations call us, and we deserve it well. But I wonder we never say, Of what use are silks, wine, spices, and outlandish wares of foreign nations? seeing we have wine, corn, wool, flax, wood, and stones in German lands—not only a sufficiency for support, but also a choice and selection for honour and adornment. We are willing to contemn the arts and languages which, without any injury, are a great ornament, use, honour, and advantage, both for the understanding of the Sacred Scriptures and for the conduct of worldly government, and are not willing to dispense with outlandish wares, which are neither necessary nor useful, and, moreover, distress and ruin us. Have we not good reason to be called German fools and beasts?[2]

"Indeed, if there were no other use to be derived from the languages, it ought to rejoice and animate us that we have so noble and fine a gift of God, wherewith He has visited and favoured us Germans above all other lands. It doth not appear that the devil would suffer these same languages to come forward by means of the high schools and cloisters; on the contrary, they have always raved most vehemently, and still rave against them. For the devil smelled the roast,[3] that, if the languages revived, his kingdom would get a hole which he could not easily stop up again. Now, since he hath not been able to prevent their revival, he thinks still to keep them so poorly, that they shall decline and fall away again of themselves. It is no welcome guest that hath come into his house with them; therefore, he means to entertain him in such a way that he shall not long remain. There be few of us that perceive this wicked trick of the devil, my dear masters! Therefore, beloved Germans! let us here open our eyes, thank God for the noble

[1] This was a stroke of diplomacy. It gathered to his standard that vast and powerful following which hitherto reasoned and acted in darkness. "Here is a man," said they, "who will teach us in our own tongue that we may know how and when to act; we will follow him."

[2] Here was the argument upon which Carlstadt and his fanatical following based their action, when they tore down the effigies and beat out the stained glass windows in after years.

[3] Our English version has inverted this. We say, "smelled a rat."

treasure, and take fast hold of it, that it may not again be wrested from us, and the devil wreak his spite.[1]

### *Portion of Luther's Sermon concerning Angels.*[2]

From a discourse on good and evil angels, preached at Wittenberg, at the Feast of Michaelmas, 1533, from the words, "*Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.*" —Matt. xviii. 10.

"This, peradventure, is a childish sermon, but, nevertheless, it is good and needful; and so simple, and so needful, that it may profit us old folks also. For the angels are not only present with children, but also with us who are old. So says St. Paul, in the first epistle to the Corinthians, xi. 10, 'For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the angels.' Women should not be adorned in the church and congregation as if they were going to a dance, but be covered with a veil for the sake of the angels. St. Paul here fetcheth in the angels, and saith that they are present at the sermon, and at sacred offices and Divine service. This service of the angels doth not seem to be precious; but herein we see what are genuine good works. The dear angels are not proud, as we men; but they walk in Divine obedience, and in the service of men, and wait upon young children. How could they perform a meaner work than to wait day and night upon children? What doth a child? It suckles, weeps, sleeps, and is like other beings. Truly an admirable thing, that the holy ministering Spirits should wait upon children, who eat, drink, sleep, and wake! To look at it, it doth indeed seem a lowly office. But the dear angels perform it with joy, for it is well-pleasing to God, who hath enjoined it upon them. A monk, on the contrary, saith, Shall I wait upon children? That will I not do. I will go about higher and greater works. I will put on a cowl, and will mortify myself in the cloister. But if thou wilt consider it aright, these are the highest and best offices which are

[1] He implies that it has been the studious effort of Rome to keep Germany in darkness. That was, in fact, the secret of Roman supremacy.

[2] This discourse, as the text implies, refers more particularly to children. For them Luther had an active and abiding affection, frequently leaving his books to join with them at play. When he had arrived at paternal dignities he loved them not less. Perhaps the cheerlessness of his own youth kindled in him a sympathy which would try to shield others from such retrospects.

rendered to children, and to pious Christians. What do parents? What are their works? They are the menials and the servants of young children. All that they do—they themselves confess—they do for the sake of their children, that they may be educated. So do also the dear angels. Why, then, should we be ashamed to wait upon children? And if the dear angels did not take charge of children, what would become of them? For parents, with the help of prince and magistrate, are far too feeble to bring them up. Were it not for the protection of the dear angels, no child would grow to full age, though the parents should bestow all possible diligence upon them. Therefore hath God ordained and set for the care and defence of children, not only parents, but also emperors, kings, princes, and lastly, His high and great Spirits, the holy angels, that no harm may befall them. It were well that the children were impressed with these things.[1]

"On the other hand, one should also tell children of the wiles of the devil, and of evil spirits. Dear child, one should say to to them, if thou wilt not be pious, thy little angel will run away from thee, and the evil spirit, the black Popelmann, will come to thee. Therefore, be pious, and pray, and thy little angel will come to thee, and the Popelmann will leave thee. And this is even the pure truth. The devil sits in a corner, and if he could throttle both parent and child, he would do it not otherwise than gladly. . . .

"Thus are the dear angels watchmen also, and keep watch over us, and protect us. And were it not for their guardianship the black Nick would soon find us, seeing he is an angry and untiring spirit; but the dear angels are our true guardians against him. When we sleep, and parents at home, and the magistrate in the city, and the prince of the country sleep likewise, and can neither govern nor protect us, then watch the holy angels, and guard and govern us for the best. When the devil can do nothing else, he affrighteth me in my sleep, or maketh me sick, that I cannot sleep. Then no man can defend me; all they that are in the house are asleep; but the dear angels sit at my bedside, and they say to the devil, Let this man sleep. This is the office which the angels perform for me,

[1] Our own cradle song, beginning

"Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,
Holy angels guard thy bed,"

is from an ancient German tradition that a special guardianship of this kind is maintained over children. Commencing with the Christ-child, that watchfulness has been extended over all children ever since.

unless I have deserved that God should withdraw His hand from me, and not permit His angels to guard and defend me, but suffer me to be scourged a little, to the end that I may be humbled, and acknowledge the blessing of God, which He conferreth upon me by the ministry of the dear angels. . . .

"I myself do often feel the raging of the devil within me. At times I believe; at times I believe not. At times I am merry; at times I am sad. Yet do I see that it happeneth not as the evil multitude wish, who would not give so much as a penny for preaching, baptism, and sacrament. Now, although the devil is beyond measure wicked, and hath no good thing in purpose, yet do all orders proceed and remain according to wont. . . .

"If we keep these instructions of which I have spoken, then shall we continue in the true understanding and faith, and the dear angels will continue in their office and honours. They will do what is commanded them by God, and we shall do whatsoever is commanded us, that thus we and they may know and praise God for our Creator and Lord. Amen."

## *Concerning God the Father.*

FROM AN EXPOSITION OF THE CHRISTIAN CREED, DELIVERED AT SCHMALKALD, 1537.[1]

*Art. I.—"I believe in God the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth."*

He it is first of all held up to us that we know and learn whence we are derived, what we are, and where we belong. All wise men have ever been concerned to know whence the world and ourselves have proceeded, but have not been able to discover. They have supposed that man is born by chance, without a master by whom his birth is ordained and brought to pass, and that he lives and dies by chance like other beasts. Some have advanced farther, and have pondered this subject until they were forced to conclude that the world and man must have proceeded from an Eternal God, because they are such mighty and glorious creations. Nevertheless, they have not been able to attain to any true knowledge thereof. But we know it well, howbeit not of and from ourselves, but from the

[1] The formal theory of Protestantism was there drawn up by Luther and Melancthon, Feb. 15th, 1537. This discourse formed the substance of a Tract published by Luther that year, entitled "*Von der Gewalt und dem Primat des Papstes.*"

Word of God, which is here brought before us in the creed. Therefore, wouldst thou know whence thou and I and all men are derived? Listen, and I will tell thee. It is God the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, an only God, who has created and preserves all things. Now thou knowest it. It is, indeed, a simple doctrine to look at, and a plain sermon. And yet no man, be he as wise as he could be, was able to find it, save He who came down from heaven, and revealed the same to us.

The wise man, Aristotle, concludes that the world existed from eternity. To that, one must say that he knew nothing at all of this art. But when it is said that heaven and earth are a creation or work made by Him who is called an only God, and made of nothing, that is an art above all arts. And thus it is with me, and thee, and the world. Sixty years ago I was nothing, as yet. And so, innumerable children will be born after us, who are nothing as yet. So the world six thousand years ago was nothing, and, in time, will be nothing again. And so, all was brought out of nothing into being, and shall be brought out of being into nothing again, until all is created anew more glorious and fair. This, I say, we know, and the Holy Scriptures teacheth it us, and little children have it presented to them thus, in the words of the creed, "I believe in God the Father," &c.

Therefore, learn first of all, from this, whence thou comest: namely, from Him who is called Creator of heaven and earth. That may be counted a great and sublime honour, which I ought reasonably to accept with great joy, that I am called, and am, a creature of the only and most high God. The world seeketh after honour with money, force, and the like; but it hath not the piety rightly to consider and reflect upon this honour, concerning which we pray, through the mouth of young children, here in the creed, that God is our Master, who has given us body and soul, and preserves them still from day to day. If we rightly believed this, and deemed it true, there would spring from it great praise and boasting; for that I can say, the Master who has created the sun, He has also created me. As now the sun boasts its beauty and its glory, so will I boast and say, I am the work and creature of my God.

With this honour should every man be satisfied, and say with joy, I believe in God, Creator of heaven and earth, who has hung His name about my neck, that I should be His creature, and that He should be called my God and Maker. It is a children's sermon, and a common saying; nevertheless one sees well who they be that understand it. We deem it no particular

honour that we are God's creatures; but that any one should be a prince or great lord, we open eyes and mouth. Yet are these but human creatures, as Peter calls them, and an afterwork; for, if God did not come first with His creatures, and make a man, there could be no prince. Yet do all men clamour about such an one, as if it were some great and precious thing, whereas it is much greater and more glorious to be a creature of God. Therefore should servants, and maid-servants, and all men, accept this high honour, and say, I am a man. That is a higher title than to be a prince. Not God, but men, make the prince; but God alone can make me a man.

It is said of the Jews that they have a prayer wherein they praise God for three things: first, that they are created men, and not irrational animals; secondly, that they are created male, and not female; thirdly, that they are created Jews, and not heathens. But that is praising God as fools are wont, by flouting and vilifying other creatures of God at the same time. So doth not the Psalmist praise Him; he includes all that God has made, and says, Praise the Lord on earth! ye whales, and all the deeps!

Furthermore, this article teacheth us not only who hath created us, and whence we are, but also where we belong. This is shown us by the word Father. He is, at the same time, Father and Almighty Creator. The beasts cannot call Him Father, but we are to call Him thus, and to be called His children. With this word He showeth what destination He hath appointed us, having first taught us whence we are, and what praise and honour have been bestowed upon us. What is the end and purpose of the whole? This—that ye shall be children, and that I will be your Father; that I have not only created you and will preserve you here, but that I will have you to be My children, and suffer you to be My heirs, who shall not be thrust out of the house like other creatures, oxen, cows, sheep, &c., that either perish all or else are eaten; but, besides that ye are My creatures, ye shall also be for evermore My children, and live alway.

Thus do we pray and confess when we say in the creed, I believe in God the Father, that, in like manner as He is Father and liveth for ever, we also, as His children, shall live for ever and shall not perish. Therefore are we by so much a higher and fairer creation than other creatures, that we are not only creatures of God, and His work, but are destined also to live for ever with our Father.

This is an article with which we should day by day converse, that the longer we taste thereof the more we may prove it; for

it is impossible, with words or with thoughts, to comprehend what is meant by God the Father. A sated and weary heart may hear but doth not consider it; but the heart which rightly received such words would often think thereon with joy, and when it looked upon the sun, moon, and other creatures, would recognise herein a special favour, that it is called a child of God, and that God is willing to be and remain our Father, and that we shall evermore live and remain with God.

This, then, is the first article, whence we briefly learn that a Christian is a fair and glorious creation that cometh from God, and that the end which he craves, and for which he is destined, is eternal life.

### *Dr. Martin Luther's Simple Method How to Pray. Written for Master Peter (Barber).*

DEAR MASTER PETER,

I give you as good as I have, and will show you how I myself manage with prayer. Our Lord God grant unto you and everyone to manage better. Amen.

*First*, when I feel that I am become cold and indisposed to prayer, by reason of other business and thoughts, I take my psalter and run into my chamber, or, if day and season serve, into the church to the multitude, and begin to repeat to myself—just as children use—the ten commandments, the creed, and, according as I have time, some sayings of Christ, or of Paul, or some Psalms. Therefore, it is well to let prayer be the first employment in the early morning, and the last in the evening. Avoid diligently those false and deceptive thoughts which say, Wait a little, I will pray an hour hence; I must first perform this or that. For, with such thoughts, a man quits prayer for business, which lays hold of and entangles him, so that he comes not to pray the whole day long.

Howbeit, works may sometimes occur which are as good, or better than prayer, especially if necessity require them. There is a saying to this effect which goes under the name of St. Jerome: "All the works of the faithful are prayer." And there is a proverb: "Whoso labours faithfully, he prays twice;" the meaning of which saying must be, that a believer fears and honours God in his labour, and thinks of His commandments—to do wrong to no man—not to steal, nor take advantage, nor to betray. And, doubtless, such thoughts and such faith make his work a prayer and an offering of praise. On the other hand, it must be equally true that the works of the unbelieving are mere

curses, and that he who labours unfaithfully curses twice. For the thoughts of his heart in his employment must lead him to despise God and to transgress His law, to do wrong to his neighbour, to steal, and to betray. What are such thoughts but mere curses against God and man?

. . . . Of constant prayer, Christ indeed says, men ought always to pray. For men ought always to guard against sin and wrong, which no man can do except he fear God, and set His commandment before his eyes. Nevertheless, we must take heed that we do not disuse ourselves to actual prayer, and interpret works to be necessary which are not necessary, and by that means become at last negligent, and indolent, and cold, and reluctant to pray. For the devil is not indolent or negligent around us; and our flesh is alive and fresh toward sin, and averse from the spirit of prayer.

Now, when the heart is warmed by this oral communion, and has come to itself, then kneel down, or stand with folded hands, and eyes toward heaven, and say, or think, in as few words as possible.[1]

Finally, observe that thou must ever make the "Amen" strong, and not doubt but that God assuredly heareth thee with all His grace, and saith "yea" to thy prayer. And think that thou kneelest or standest not alone, but the whole Christendom, or all pious Christians, with thee, and thou among them, in consenting unanimous supplication which God cannot despise. And quit not thy prayer until thou hast said or thought, "Go to now, this prayer hath been heard, heard with God; that know I surely, and of a truth." That is the meaning of *amen*.

Also, thou must know that I would not have thee to repeat all these last words in thy prayer, for that would make it, at last, a babble and a vain empty gossip—a reading from the book and after the letter, such as the rosaries of the laity, and the prayers of the priests and monks, have been. My purpose is to awaken the heart, and instruct it in what kind of thought to connect with the Lord's Prayer. If the heart be rightly warmed and eager for prayer, it can express these thoughts with very different words, perhaps with fewer, perhaps with more. For I, myself, do not bind myself to precisely these words and syllables, but say the words to-day after this fashion, to-morrow otherwise, according as I feel warm and free. I keep as nearly as I can to the same thoughts and meaning. But it will sometimes happen,

[1] Notice in all the productions of Luther that there are no superfluous words. This, also, is a departure from the practices of his time, when sentences and subjects were prolix, and it was considered a mark of scholarship to introduce as much tributary matter as possible.

that while engaged with some single article or petition, I walk into such rich thoughts that I leave the other six. And when these rich and good thoughts come, one ought to give place to them, and let other prayers go, and listen in silence, and on no account offer any hindrance; for then the Holy Ghost Himself preaches, and one word of His preaching is better than a thousand of our prayers. And so I have often learned more from one prayer than I could have got from much reading and composing.

Wherefore it is of the greatest importance that the heart be disengaged and disposed to prayer, as saith the Preacher (cap. iv. 17), "Prepare thy heart before prayer, that thou mayst not tempt God." What else is it but tempting God, when the mouth babbles while the heart is distracted with other things? Like the priest who prayed after this fashion: "*Deus in auditorum meum intende;* Fellow, hast thou unharnessed the horses? *Domine ad adjurandum me festina;* Maid, go and milk the cows! *Gloria patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto;* Run, boy, as if the devil were after thee!" &c. Of such prayers I have heard and experienced much in Popedom in my day. . . . . But now, God be praised, I see well that that is not prayer in which one forgets what one has said. For a true prayer is conscious of all its words and thoughts, from the beginning to the end of the prayer.

Even so, a good and diligent barber must fix his thoughts, his purpose, and his eyes with great exactness upon the razor and the hair, and not forget where he is, in the stroke or the cut.[1] But if he chooses to chat much at the same time, or hath his thoughts or his eyes elsewhere, he is like to cut one's mouth and nose, and throat into the bargain. Thus each thing, if it is to be done well, requires the entire man, with all his senses and members. As the saying goes, "*Pluribus intentus, minor est ad singula sensus,*" he who thinks of many things thinks of nothing, and does nothing aright. How much more must prayer—if it is to be a good prayer—possess the heart entirely and alone.

This is briefly said of the "Our Father," or of prayer, as I myself am wont to pray. For to this day I suck still at the Paternoster, like a child. I eat and drink thereof like a full-grown man, and can never have enough. It is to me even more than the Psalter (which, notwithstanding, I dearly love) the best of all prayers. Assuredly, it will be found that the right Master hath ordained and taught it; and it is a pity upon pities that

[1] The person to whom this letter was addressed was by trade a barber.

such a prayer of such a Master should be babbled and rattled over by all the world so entirely without devotion. Many pray, it may be, some thousand Paternosters a-year; and if they should pray a thousand years after that fashion, they would not have tasted or prayed one letter or tittle thereof. In fine, the Paternoster (as well as the Name and Word of God) is the greatest martyr upon earth, for everyone tortures and abuses it; few comfort and make it glad by a true use of it.

### *Luther's Prayer at the Diet of Worms.*[1]

Almighty, Eternal God! What a strange thing is this world! How doth it open wide the mouths of the people! How small and poor is the confidence of men toward God! How is the flesh so tender and weak, and the devil so mighty and so busy through his apostles and the wise of this world! How soon do they withdraw the hand, and whirl away, and run the common path and the broad way to hell, where the godless belong. They look only upon that which is splendid and powerful, great and mighty, and which hath consideration. If I turn my eyes thither also, it is all over with me; the bell is cast, and the judgment is pronounced. Ah, God! Ah, God! O, Thou my God, stand Thou by me against the reason and wisdom of all the world! Do Thou so! Thou must do it—Thou alone. Behold, it is not my cause, but Thine. For my own person I have nothing to do here with these great lords of the world. Gladly would I, too, have good quiet days, and be unperplexed. But Thine is the cause, Lord; it is just and eternal. Stand Thou by me, Thou true, Eternal God! I confide in no man. It is to no purpose, and in vain. Everything halteth that is fleshly, or that savoureth of flesh. O God! O God! Hearest Thou not, my God? Art Thou dead? No; Thou canst not die; Thou only hidest Thyself. Hast Thou chosen me for this end? I ask Thee. But I know of a surety that Thou hast chosen me. Ha! then may God direct it; for never did I think, in all my life, to be opposed to such great lords; neither have I intended it. Ha! God, then stand by me in the name of Jesus Christ, who shall be my shelter and my shield, yea, my firm tower, through the might and strengthening of Thy Holy Spirit. Lord, where stayest Thou? Thou my God, where art Thou? Come, come! I am ready even to lay down my life for

1 This prayer was considered among the most effective of Luther's productions. It was published immediately after the closing of the Diet, and had the effect to intensify the feeling in his favour.

this cause, patient as a little lamb. For just is the cause, and Thine. So will I not separate myself from Thee for ever. Be it determined in Thy name. The world shall not be able to force me against my conscience, though it were full of devils. And though my body, originally the work and creature of Thy hands, go to destruction in this cause—yea, though it be shattered in pieces—Thy word and Thy Spirit, they are good to me still! It concerneth only the body; the soul is Thine, and belongeth to Thee, and shall also remain with Thee for ever. Amen. God help me! Amen.

*Portion of a Letter from Luther to Elector John of Saxony.*[1]

. . . . Hence I receive your Electoral Princely Grace's all too generous and gracious favour in such wise, that I straightway fear. For by no means would I willingly, here in this life, be found with those to whom Christ saith: "Wo unto you that are rich, for you have had your reward." Moreover, to speak after the manner of the world, I would not be burthensome to your Electoral Princely Grace, since I know that your Electoral Princely Grace hath so much of giving to do that it may not have more than enough for its need. For too much bursts the bag.

Wherefore, although the liver-coloured cloth had been too much, yet, that I may be grateful to your Electoral Princely Grace, I will also wear the black coat in honour of your Electoral Princely Grace; howbeit it is far too costly for me, and were it not for your Electoral Princely Grace's gift, I could nevermore wear such a coat.

For this cause, I entreat that your Electoral Princely Grace will wait until I complain and beg, myself, to the end that your Electoral Princely Grace's anticipation of my wants may not make me shy of begging for others, who are much more worthy of such grace. For without this your Electoral Princely Grace does too much for me; which Christ shall graciously and richly recompense. That He may do so, I pray from my heart. Amen.

Your Electoral Princely Grace's
Obedient MARTINUS LUTHER.

Wittenberg,
*The 17th Aug., 1529.*

1 Acknowledging the gift of a gown. It was the custom of the Elector to present Luther with a gown each year, and at times when he was expected to appear in great public assemblages.

### *Letter to his Wife.*

To my Gracious Lady, Catherine Luther Von Bora and Zeilsdorf, near Wittenberg, my Sweetheart.

Grace and peace, my dear maid and wife! Your Grace shall know that we are here, God be praised, fresh and sound; eat like Bohemians, yet not to excess; guzzle like Germans, yet not much; but are joyful. For our gracious Lord of Magdeburg, Bishop Amsdorf, is our messmate. We know nothing new but that Doct. Caspar Mecum and Menius have journeyed from Hagenau to Strasburg, in the service and in honour of Hans von Jehnen. M. Philips is nice again, God be praised! Tell my dear Doct. Shiefer that his Kind Ferdinand will have a cry, as if he would ask the Turk to be godfather over the Evangelical Princes. Hope it is not true; it would be too bad. Write me whether you got all that I sent you, as lately, 90 Fl. by Wolf Paerman. Herewith I commend you to God. Amen. And let the children pray. There is here such a heat and drought that it is unspeakable and insupportable, day and night. Come, dear Last Day! Amen. Friday after Margarethas, 1540. The Bishop of Magdeburg sends thee friendly greeting.

### *Letter to his Wife.*

To the rich lady at Zeilsdorf, Lady Katherin Lutherin, bodily resident at Wittenberg, and mentally wandering at Zeilsdorf—my beloved—for her own hands. In her absence, to be broken and read by Doct. Pomeran, Preacher.

. . . . Grant that we may find a good drink of beer with you! For, God willing, to-morrow as Tuesday, we will set out for Wittenberg. It is all dung with the Diet at Hagenau—pains and labour lost, and expenses in vain. Howbeit, if we have done nothing else, we have brought M. Philips out of hell, and will fetch him home again, from the grave, with much joy, if God will, and by His grace. Amen. The devil out here is himself possessed with nine bad devils; he is burning and doing mischief after a frightful fashion. More than a thousand acres of wood in the Thuringian forest, belonging to my Gracious Master, have been burned, and are yet burning. Moreover, there are tidings to-day that the forest of Werda is also on fire, and many others besides. No attempts to quench the flames are of any avail. That will make wood dear. Pray, and cause prayer to be said, against the wicked Satan, who seeketh—

vehemently seeketh—to ruin us not only in body and soul, but also in name and estate. May Christ our Lord come from heaven and kindle a bit of fire too, for the devil and his angels, that he shall not be able to quench! Amen. I am not certain whether this letter will find you at Wittenberg or at Zeilsdorf, else I would have written more. Herewith I commend thee to God. Amen. Greet our children, our boarders and all. Monday after Jacobi, 1540.

### *His Last Letter to his Wife.*

To my friendly, dear Kate Luther, at Wittenberg. For her own hands. &c.

Grace and peace in the Lord! Dear Kate, we arrived to-day, at eight o'clock, in Halle, but could not proceed to Eisleben, for there met us a great Anabaptist, with billows of water and cakes of ice, covering the country, and threatening us with baptism. For the same cause we could not return again, on account of the Mulda; but were forced to be still at Halle, between the waters. Not that we thirsted to drink of them. We took, instead, good Torgau beer and good Rhenish wine, and comforted and refreshed ourselves with the same, while we waited till the Saale should have spent her wrath. For, since the people and the coachmen, and we ourselves, were fearful, we did not wish to venture into the water and tempt God. For the devil is our enemy and dwelleth in the water, and prevention is better than complaining, and there is no need to give the Pope and his officers occasion for a foolish joy.

. . . . For the present, nothing more, except to bid thee pray for us and be good. I think if thou hadst been with us, thou wouldst also have counselled us to do as we have done. Then, for once, we had followed thy counsel. Herewith be commended to God. Amen. Halle, on the day of Paul's conversion, anno, 1546.

MARTINUS LUTHER, *Doct.*

### *Portion of a Letter to his Father.*

. . . . Herewith I commend you to Him who loveth you better than you love yourself, and hath proved His love in that He hath taken your sins upon Himself, and paid with His blood, and hath given you to know the same by His Gospel, and to believe it by His Spirit. . . . The same, our dear Lord

and Saviour, be with you and by you until—God grant it may come to pass here or yonder—we see each other again in joy. For our faith is sure, and we doubt not we shall shortly see each other again with Christ; seeing the departure from this life to God is much less than if I should come hither from you at Mansfield, or you should go hence from me at Wittenberg. That is true, of a certainty. It is but an hour of sleep, and then all shall be changed.

Howbeit, I hope that your pastor and preacher will show you richly a true service in these things, so that you scarce shall need my gossip; yet could I not omit to excuse my bodily absence, which, God knows, grieveth me from the heart.

My Kate, Hanschen, Lenichen, Aunt Lehne, and the whole house greet you and pray for you faithfully. Greet my dear mother and all our friends!

God's grace and power be and remain with you for ever! Amen.

Your dear Son,
MARTINUS LUTHER.

Wittenberg, 15th February, anno, 1530.

## *Letter to his Son John.*

Grace and peace in Christ, my dear little son. I see, with pleasure, that thou learnest well and prayest diligently. Do so, my son, and continue. When I come home I will bring thee a pretty fairing.

I know a pretty, merry garden wherein there are many children. They have little golden coats, and they gather beautiful apples under the trees, and pears, cherries, plums, and wheat-plums; they sing and jump and are merry. They have beautiful little horses, too, with gold bits and silver saddles. And I asked the man to whom the garden belonged, whose children they were? And he said, They are the children that love to pray, and to learn, and are good. Then I said, Dear man, I have a son too; his name is Johnny Luther. May he not also come into this garden and eat these beautiful apples and pears, and ride these fine horses? Then the man said, If he loves to pray, and to learn, and is good, he shall come into this garden, and Lippus and Jost too, and when they all come together they shall have fifes and trumpets, lutes, and all sorts of music, and they shall dance and shoot with little cross-bows.

And he showed me a fine meadow there in the garden, made for dancing. There, hung nothing but golden fifes, trumpets,

and fine silver cross-bows. But it was early, and the children had not yet eaten; therefore I could not wait the dance, and I said to the man: Ah, dear sir! I will immediately go and write all this to my little son Johnny, and tell him to pray diligently, and to learn well, and to be good, so that he also may come to this garden. But he has an Aunt Lehne; he must bring her with him. Then the man said, It shall be so; go and write him so.

Therefore, my dear little son Johnny, learn and pray away! and tell Lippus and Jost too that they must learn and pray. And then you shall come to the garden together. Herewith I commend thee to Almighty God. And greet Aunt Lehne, and give her a kiss for my sake.

Thy dear Father,

MARTINUS LUTHER.

Anno, 1530.

### *To the Lady Von Stockhausen.*[1]

To the honourable and virtuous Lady N. Von Stockhausen, Captain's lady at Nordhausen, my gracious and kind friend.

Grace and peace in Christ! Honourable and virtuous Lady! I have written, in haste, a brief letter of consolation to your dear lord. Well, the devil is hostile to you both, for that you love his enemy, Christ. You must pay the price of that, as He Himself saith, "Because I have chosen you, therefore the world hateth you, and the prince thereof; but be of good cheer." Precious in the sight of God are the sufferings of His saints. But now, in haste, I can write but little. Take heed before all things that you leave not your husband one moment alone; and let him have nothing wherewith he might do injury to himself. Solitude to him is pure poison, and therefore the devil himself driveth him to it. But it were well to tell, or to have read in his presence, many stories, new tidings, and strange matter. It will not be amiss if, at times, they are idle and false tidings, and tales of Turks, Tartars, and the like—if haply he may be incited thereby to laugh and to jest. And then, down upon him with comfortable words of Scripture. Whatsoever you do, let it not be lonesome or still about him; that he may not sink into thought. It shall do no harm if he shall be made angry on account thereof. Pretend as if you were sorry for it, and scold,

[1] The husband of this lady was suffering from melancholia. They were warm advocates of the cause of Luther, and lost no opportunities to befriend him.

&c. But still do it the more. Take this in haste for want of better. Christ, who is the cause of such sorrow, will help him, as He hath lately conferred help on yourself. Only hold fast! you are the apple of his eye. Whoever toucheth that, toucheth him. Amen!

DOCTOR MARTINUS LUTHER.

Wittenberg, Wednesday after Catherinas, 1532.

### *Portion of a Letter to Chancellor Bruck.*

A letter of encouragement in relation to the cause of the reformer.

To the estimable right learned Master Gregory Bruck, Doctor of Laws, the Elector of Saxony, his Chancellor and Counsellor, my gracious Master and friendly, dear Gossip.

. . . . I saw lately two miracles. First, as I looked out at the window, I saw the stars in the heavens and the whole fair dome of God; yet did I see no pillars on which the Master had placed this dome. Nevertheless, the heavens fell not, and the dome stands fast yet. Now there are some that seek for such pillars. They would fain lay hold of and feel them. And because they cannot do this, they struggle and tremble as though the heavens must certainly fall, for no other reason than because they cannot seize or see the pillars. Could they but lay hold of these, the heavens would stand firm.

Next, I saw also great thick clouds hover over us with such weight that they might be likened to a great sea; yet I saw no floor upon which they rested or found footing, nor any vessels in which they were contained. Still they fell not down upon us, but greeted us with a sour face and flew away. When they were gone, then shone forth both the floor and our roof which had held them—the rainbow. That was a weak, thin, small floor and roof, and it vanished in the clouds; and in appearance was more like an image, such as is seen through a painted glass, than a strong floor; so that one might despair on account of the floor, as well as on account of the great weight of water. Nevertheless, it was found in truth that this Almighty image (such it seemed) bore the burden of the waters and protected us. Yet there be some who consider, regard, and fear the water and the thickness of the clouds, and the heavy burden of them, more than this thin, narrow, and light image. For they would fain feel the strength of the image, and because they cannot do this,

they fear that the clouds will occasion an everlasting sin-flood.

Thus, in friendly wise, must I jest with your Honour, and yet write without jesting; for I have had special joy, in that I learned that your Honour hath had, before all others, good courage and a cheerful heart in this our buffeting. I had hoped that, at the least, a *pax politica* might have been obtained; but God's thoughts are far above our thoughts. And it is even right, for He, as St. Paul saith, heareth and doth *supra quam intelligimus, aut petimus.* "For we know not how to pray as we ought."—Rom. viii. 26. If He should hear us now, after the same manner in which we pray—that the Emperor may give us peace—it might be *infra*, not *supra quam intelligimus*, and the Emperor, not God, should have the glory.

. . . . But this work which God hath vouchsafed to us by His grace, He will also bless and further by His Spirit. He will find way, time, and place to help us, and will neither forget nor delay. They have not yet accomplished the half of what they undertake, the *viri sanguinius.* Nor have they yet all returned to their homes, or whither they would go. Our rainbow is weak; their clouds are mighty, but in fine *videbitur cryus toni.* Your Honour will pardon my gossip, and comfort Magister Philip and all the rest. Christ shall also comfort and preserve me, our most Gracious Lord. To Him be praise and thanks in eternity! Amen! To His grace I also faithfully commend your Honour.

MARTINUS LUTHER, *Doct.*

Ex Eremo, 5th Aug., anno, MDXXX.

*The following is Luther's Will, dated 6th January, 1542:—*

"I, the undersigned Martin Luther, Doctor of Divinity, do hereby give and grant unto my dear and faithful wife, Catherine, as dower to be enjoyed by her during her life, at her own will and pleasure, the farm of Zeilsdorf, with all the improvements and additions I have made thereto; the house called Brun, which I purchased under the name of Wolff; and all my silver goblets and other valuables, such as rings, chains, gold and silver medals, &c., to the amount of about a thousand florins.

"I make this disposition of my means, in the first place, because my Catherine has always been a gentle, pious, and faithful wife to me, has loved me tenderly, and has, by the blessing of God, given me, and brought up for me, five children, still, I

thank God, living, besides others who are now dead. Secondly, that out of the said means she may discharge my debts, amounting to about four hundred and fifty florins, in the event of my not paying them myself before my death. In the third place, and more especially, because I would not have her dependent on her children, but rather that her children should be dependent on her—honouring her, and submissive to her, according to God's command; and that they should not act as I have seen some children act, whom the devil has excited to disobey the ordinance of God in this respect, more particularly in cases where their mother has become a widow, and they themselves have married. I consider, moreover, that the mother will be the best guardian of these means in behalf of her children, and I feel that she will not abuse this confidence I place in her, to the detriment of those who are her own flesh and blood, whom she has borne in her bosom.

"Whatever may happen to her after my death (for I cannot foresee the designs of God), I have, I say, full confidence that she will ever conduct herself as a good mother towards her children, and will conscientiously share with them whatever she possesses.

"And here I beg all my friends to testify the truth, and to defend my dear Catherine, should it happen, as is very possible, that ill tongues should charge her with retaining for her own private use, separate from the children, any money they may say I left concealed. I hereby certify that we have no ready money, no treasure of coin of any description. Nor will it appear surprising to any who shall consider that I have had no income beyond my salary, and a few presents now and then, and that yet, with this limited revenue, we have built a good deal, and maintained a large establishment.

"I consider it, indeed, a special favour of God, and I thank Him daily, therefore, that we have been able to manage as we have done, and that our debts are not greater than they are.

"I pray my gracious lord, Duke John Frederick, Elector, to confirm and maintain the present deed, even though it should not be exactly in the form required by the law.

(Signed) "MARTIN LUTHER.

"Witnesses—Melancthon, Cruciger, Bugenhagen."

[Luther's entire personal property, including many gifts of silver mugs, rings, &c., amounted to less than £200 of English money, of which he owed £80. The original will was presented by the Archduchess Maria Dorothea to the Evangelical Church

of Hungary, where it is now preserved among the archives. In 1878 it was critically examined by experts, to confirm its genuineness. In 1879, Luther's wedding ring, bearing the inscription, "Dr. Martino Luthero, Catharina Von Bora, 13th June, 1525," was sold by Herr Rothe, a jeweller of Dusseldorf. On the ring is a representation of the Passion of our Lord—the cross and the body of Jesus forming the middle, surrounded by tools of the carpenter's craft, a small ruby representing the blood upon His side. At the time of his death, Luther owned the convent of his order in Wittenberg, given him by Elector Frederick, also a house in the same city, and the small farm at Zeilsdorf. This constituted the principal part of his estate.]

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