

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION
Of The Sixteenth Century
By P. A. PETER

Brother Ted Smith began transcribing this book one chapter at a time early in 1983. He typed every detail including the Preface, the table of Authorities, the Table of Contents for the entire book and Part I with its eight chapters. It was distributed to Bible Students as Item #701. At the end of this issue he added:

END OF PART I. PART II WILL FOLLOW.

This indicated that he had the prospect of typing the next Part II with its twelve chapters and likely expected to work on subsequent Parts and chapters with future installments until the book was complete. While working on Part II he died and it was never released.

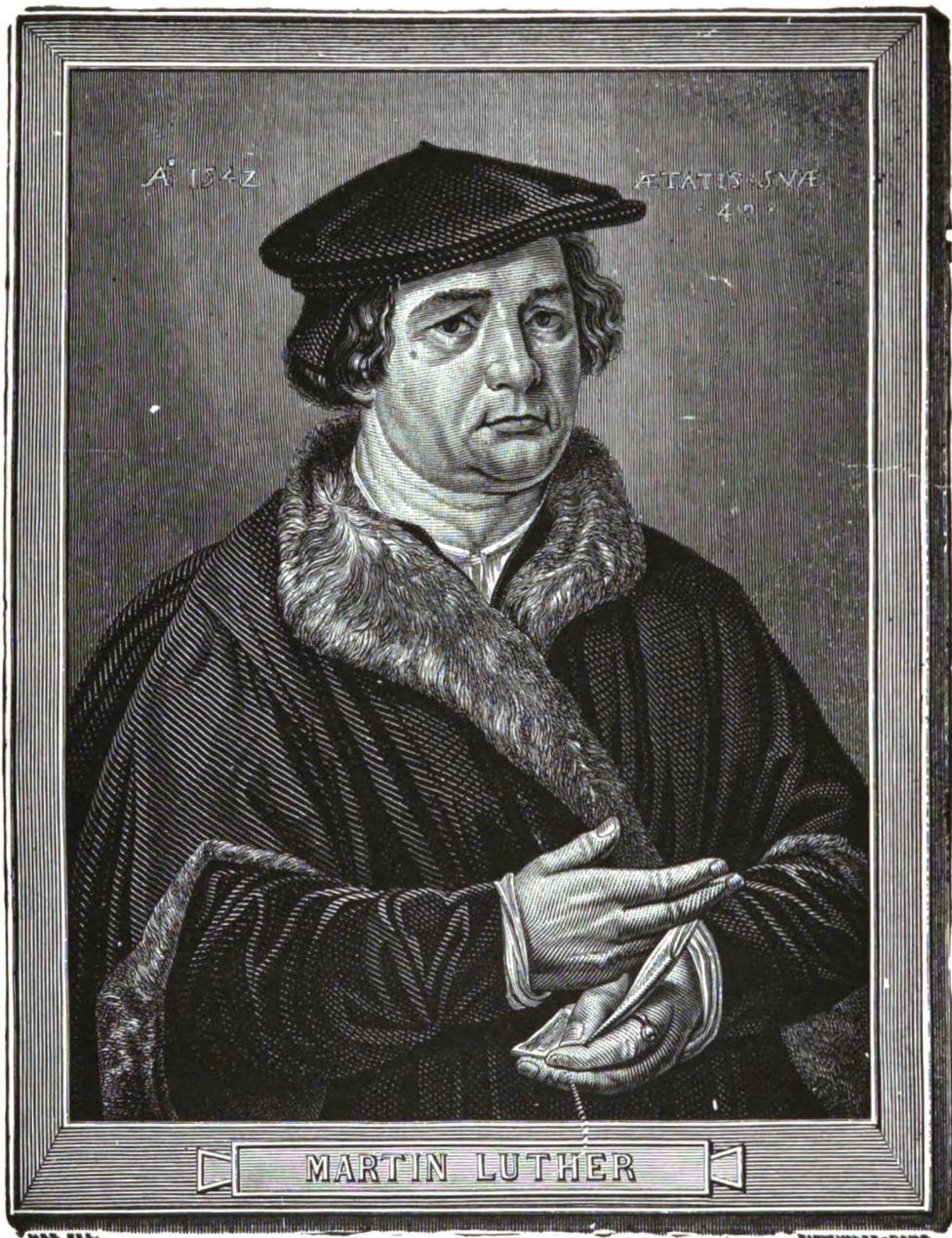
This was a concise history of the Reformation and Martin Luther published in 1916 by a Lutheran minister, Rev. Phillip Adam Peter (1832-1919). Obviously Brother Ted considered this material was worthy of Bible Student consideration of the forces and providences that formed an era that changed the religious world.

Having found a copy of the original work, we offer it here as the full version of the copy that Brother Ted began transcribing. It seems he used his typewriter to its full potential. This may be a fitting tribute to Brother Ted who was not able to complete a task begun.

HISTORY
OF THE
REFORMATION
OF THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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EV. LUTH. MINISTER

COLUMBUS, OHIO
LUTHERAN BOOK CONCERN
1916



PREFACE.

THE Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States at its Twenty-ninth regular Convention, held in Allegheny, Pa., from September 5th to September 11th, 1888, acting upon a suggestion of Rev. Prof. M. Loy, D. D., made to the Publication Board of the Lutheran Book Concern at Columbus, O., with reference to the publication of a popular Exposition of the Augsburg Confession of Faith and a brief History of the Reformation in the English language, appointed Dr. Loy to edit the former and the undersigned the latter. In accordance with said action of Joint Synod this little book now makes its appearance and solicits for itself the favorable notice of every friend of the doctrines and principles of the Reformation, who may peruse its pages.

In compiling this little History, I have endeavored to combine brevity with completeness in describing all the prominent features of that great religious movement of the sixteenth century, by which under the guidance of God, the pure doctrines of His Word were restored to the Church of Christ, after having been obscured for hundreds of years by the errors of the papacy. The era of the Reformation is so prolific of great events, that I have sometimes found it extremely difficult to limit

this little History within the bounds assigned me in compiling it.

In every true, impartial history of the Reformation Martin Luther is the prominent and central figure. He is this, not merely because of his eminent natural and acquired intellectual gifts and qualities which were necessary to accomplish the stupendous work of the Reformation, but chiefly because his troubled soul, laboring and struggling in vain under the bondage of the papacy to find true and abiding rest, found it at last only in that grand, fundamental truth of the Gospel, as it is expressed in the words of Divine Inspiration: *The just shall live by his faith.*

It is only when we keep this central truth in view that we can properly understand and appreciate the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century, effected by that chosen instrument in the hands of God, Dr. Martin Luther. And it is from the standpoint of the glorious doctrine of justification by faith alone, "the article of the standing or falling Church," that I have endeavored to present a brief and concise History of the Reformation. And now may this little book go forth on its mission of good to the glory of God and the benefit of all, who may read it!

P. A. PETER.

AUTHORITIES.

In preparing this little history I have frequently consulted and thankfully used the following works :

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PART I.

THE NECESSITY OF THE REFORMATION.

CHAPTER I.

The Import or Purpose of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century.

By the Reformation we mean that great religious movement called into being by the grace of God, and effected through His chosen instrument, Dr. Martin Luther, to restore to the Christian Church the true and pure doctrines of the Word of God, for the faith and practice of believers. This movement was not a mere attempt to abolish the more flagrant and manifest abuses which had crept into the Church in consequence of the corruption of the true, scriptural doctrine and the evil tendencies of the papacy, but a deep, thorough and comprehensive work, the blessed results of which shall endure throughout the ages. It was an all-powerful movement destined by the grace of God to renew the Church, to give it fresh vigor, and to lead men to the clear and pure and soul-reviving fountain of all religious truth, the Holy Scriptures. It was the gracious work of God, effected by the man whom God called to perform it, to set up the Bible as the only rule and standard of Christian doctrine and life. It was a mighty and successful

effort, led and directed by the Holy Spirit, to liberate the minds and souls and consciences of men from the galling and oppressive yoke of a worse than Egyptian bondage, to make them free from the chains and fetters of the Romish Antichrist, and to lead them into the full enjoyment of true Christian, evangelical liberty, the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. (Gal. 5, 1.)

The Reformation was not a political, philosophical nor literary movement, although it is not denied that politics, philosophy and literature were largely influenced and benefited by it. It was not a vague and visionary agitation, called into existence and conducted by fanatical dreamers, trying to usher into the world a fancied millennium, or a fabulous Utopia. It was a real and very practical work, dealing with the hearts and consciences of men. The great and all-absorbing question involved in this movement was this: How can the lost, ruined and condemned sinner find peace and pardon for his guilty soul, and be assured of the forgiveness of sin and of righteousness in the sight of God? Thus the Reformation dealt with the question of the personal relation of the believer to his God—a question of Christian conscience, and hence of the utmost importance to every member of the Church, whether he belonged to the clergy or laity.

Again: The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century was not a radical, violent and destructive revolution, bred and nurtured by discontented, untrained, undisciplined and turbulent agitators, who in their mad, unreasoning zeal would not have

hesitated for a moment to throw Church and State, and society in general, into hopeless anarchy and inextricable confusion, under the specious plea of a necessary reform. On the contrary, it was a conservative, moderate and judicious movement, which properly retained and carefully preserved all the parts and fragments of biblical truth yet held by the Roman Catholic Church, such as the fundamental doctrines of the Holy Trinity, the Person of Christ, His incarnation, birth, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, and last coming to judge mankind. But the Reformation very properly refuted and overthrew the false doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, especially the fatal errors of the meritoriousness of human works or self-righteousness and the new Pharisaic legalism taught by the clergy, as a necessary condition for obtaining the forgiveness of sin and righteousness in the sight of God.

CHAPTER II.

The Necessity of a Reformation Conceded by Authorities in the Roman Catholic Church.

That such a religious movement as the Reformation of the sixteenth century was a necessity, was admitted by some of the highest authorities in the Church of Rome. The so-called reformatory general Church Councils of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries clearly prove that there was an earnest and urgent demand for a Reformation.

This was more particularly evident at the Council of Constance in Germany, held from 1414 to 1418, but still more so at the Council of Basel in Switzerland, held from 1431 to 1439. There was a demand for reform even in the fifth Lateran Synod, at Rome, the seat of the Supreme Pontiff, held from 1512 to 1517. Before these Councils were held, many voices were heard throughout Europe earnestly asking that gross and manifest abuses, which had in the course of time found their way into the Church, be removed, as offenses to Christendom. After the death of the infamous Pope Alexander VI., and but a short time before the election of his successor, Julius II., in 1503, many Roman Catholic cardinals demanded the convocation of a General Council to devise the best ways and means to bring about a general reform of the Church. Maximilian I., Emperor of Germany, and Louis XII., King of France, by their united efforts, caused a General Church Council to be convened at Pisa in 1511, to adopt measures to remove gross and scandalous abuses. The cardinals and many other high prelates, who attended this Council, openly and unreservedly, admitted the necessity of a general reform of the Church "in its head and members."

The first Council of Pisa, held in 1409, was called to heal the schism in the Church caused by the pretensions of two rival popes, both claiming the papal chair, the one (Gregory XII.), residing in Rome and the other (Benedict XIII.), in Avignon in France. The two rivals were summoned to appear before the Council, but as both stubbornly

refused to do so, they were deposed as schismatics and heretics. A new pope (Alexander V.), was then elected by the cardinals. Before the election the cardinals had agreed, that the Council should not dissolve until "a due, reasonable and sufficient reform of the Church in head and members had been brought about." This "reform" however was never undertaken by the Council, and even the external unity of the Church under the newly-elected pope was not accomplished. On the contrary, not only Alexander V. but also Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII. reigned as rival popes, and the world beheld the ridiculous spectacle of the *one* holy Roman Catholic Church under *three* heads. As far as a Reformation was concerned the first Council of Pisa was a miserable failure. The same was also true of the second Council held at the same place in 1511, at the instance of Emperor Maximilian I. of Germany and Louis XII., King of France.

The General Council of Constance was convened in 1414 for the ostensible purpose of reforming the Church and examining the alleged heresy of John Huss of Prague, in Bohemia. Cardinal Colonna was chosen pope and assumed the name of Martin V. Huss and Jerome of Prague were condemned to be burnt at the stake as vile heretics, because they had dared to oppose the corruptions and abominations of the papacy and also because they demanded purity of doctrine and life. From such malignant, cruel and bigoted persecutors as composed the majority of this Council, no Reformation could be expected.

The Council of Basel, convened in 1431, had a very stormy time whilst deliberating on the much-needed reform of the Church. Pope Eugene IV., fearing perhaps that the Council might in the end prove to be a power hostile to the papal interests, attempted to dissolve it, in which undertaking he was successful. In 1449 the Council decreed its dissolution and closed its labors without having accomplished anything toward a true and genuine Reformation. Thus all the so-called reformatory Councils proved failures in bringing about a better condition of the Church in doctrine and life.

Many instances are recorded, by writers before the Reformation, of priests and common people deeply deploring the wretched condition of the Church during the dark age and longing for a better condition in teaching and practice. All such persons were living witnesses, testifying to the necessity of that great work which in due time should be effected by the immortal Reformer, Martin Luther. God's mourning children who were held in the Babylon of Popery and ground down to the earth by the iron heel of the Antichrist, together with many other precious souls cast out of the communion of the Roman Catholic Church, because they were falsely accused as vile and accursed heretics, fervently signed and prayed for the deliverance of Zion, when the Lord should make free the captives held in bondage so many years.

CHAPTER III.

Necessity of the Reformation for Restoring the Authority of the Bible as the Sole Standard of Faith and Practice.

A thorough Reformation was necessary in order to restore the Word of God as the only rule of doctrine and life to the Church. Before the Reformation there was but very little knowledge of the Bible. Many monks and priests, and even prelates standing high in the ranks of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, never saw and much less read the Holy Scriptures. A learned professor of the University at Paris once declared, that although he was fifty years old he did not know what the New Testament was. The study of the Bible was generally neglected and sometimes even despised by the Romish clergy. Instead of reading and studying the volume of Divine Inspiration, monks and priests and prelates studied the works of Aristotle, the celebrated Grecian philosopher and the writings of the Scholastics or school-men of middle age. These scholastic writings were full of hair-splitting subtilities, idle fantasies, and long and dry dissertations on a large variety of speculative questions of little or no importance and value to Christian doctrine and life. When old monks and priests, who were considered as high authorities in the Church, knew so little, and sometimes nothing, of the Word of God, how great then must have been the ignorance of the common people on religious matters! It is a fact that then, just as now, the

Roman Catholic clergy discouraged the reading and study of the Bible by the laity, well knowing that if sincere and honest men would read the word of God, they would discover the errors, the falsehoods, and the abominations of the papacy.

Not only did the Romish hierarchy discourage in every conceivable way the reading and the study of the Holy Scriptures, but popes and priests also put human traditions and doctrines on a level with God's inspired Word. The apocryphal books of the Old Testament, which are not inspired writings and hence not equal to the Holy Scriptures, were considered as possessing the same authority as the canonical books. In addition to this, the declarations and decisions of popes, the decrees and resolutions of Church Councils, and the judgments and maxims of Roman Catholic theologians were generally considered as being equal in authority to the teachings of the Bible. Thus the Word of God was not regarded as the sole and infallible standard, by which doctrine and life must be judged. The plain teachings of the Holy Scriptures were distorted and perverted by the Romish clergy, so as to harmonize them with their human traditions and self-invented doctrines, or else God's Word was entirely ignored and set aside to make room for the vain fantasies of men.

The oracles of Divine Inspiration being so shamefully abused by the Romish hierarchy, it is not at all astonishing, that the public preaching of the middle age was a miserable jumble of admonitions to practice a superficial, heathenish morality, together with narrations of ridiculous legends of

the saints, and pretended miracles, and cures caused by touching or handling the bones and relics of martyrs, fiery exhortations to obey the commandments of the Church as to penances and satisfactions, horrible descriptions of the pains of souls in purgatory, and appeals to the faithful to pay for masses and prayers to release them, and the like. The preaching of the precious Gospel of Christ, of our redemption by Him, of true repentance, of faith in the perfect merits and all-sufficient righteousness of our Redeemer as the ground of our justification in the sight of God, of a truly pious, Christian life, and of good works as the fruits of true faith and of the blessed assurance of eternal life and salvation, based on the infinite mercy of God and the all-perfect merits of Christ, had almost entirely ceased, and instead of the preaching of these comforting and consoling doctrines, human self-righteousness was the one great, supreme theme on which monks and priests continually discoursed.

CHAPTER IV.

Corruption of Christian Doctrines in the Roman Catholic Church.

The papacy had greatly corrupted many very important doctrines of the Christian religion! Of the Word of God Rome taught, that the Apocrypha of the Old Testament and the oral traditions of the Church are equally the sources of religious knowledge. Of the invocation of the saints it was taught, that Mary, the mother of our Lord, the

holy angels, and the departed blessed saints, should be called upon and implored for their help in bodily and spiritual need and danger. Of sin it was taught, that sensual lust, as long as it is not expressed in any deed, is not sinful and condemnable, and that even after the fall man is not totally depraved, but only weakened to a certain extent. Of faith it was taught, that it is merely the assent of the mind to that which the Church teaches, thus ignoring the principal constituent part of faith, namely, the trust or confidence of the heart in the Divine promises. Of justification it was taught, that when God justifies the believing sinner, He not only imputes to him the merits of Christ, but also infuses into him the Lord's righteousness, so that man having been made personally holy, is justified partly by the merits of Christ, and partly by his own personal holiness, thus confounding sanctification with justification. Of human obedience it was taught, that God demands this obedience as a personal satisfaction for actual sin. Of man's free-will it was taught, that man by the aid of the Holy Spirit can fit, prepare, and qualify himself through his own human powers for the acceptance of justifying grace, and thus "to a certain extent" merit the same. Of good works it was taught, that after man has received justifying grace he has the ability to keep all God's commandments, and through good works directly to merit salvation. Of the Lord's Supper it was taught, that the bread and the wine in this sacrament are substantially changed into the body and blood of Christ, by virtue of the consecration of the two

elements by the priest, so that nothing remains of the bread and wine but the original form, color, smell and taste of the two elements, and that this change of substance is called transubstantiation; furthermore, that every time the sacrament is administered Christ is offered up anew in a "bloodless manner" by the officiating priest (the sacrifice of the mass). Of the state of man after death it was taught, that there is an intermediate condition between heaven and hell, called purgatory, where imperfect souls before entering into heaven must render satisfaction and be purified of those sins which they did not expiate while on earth. Such imperfect souls, it was taught, may be very materially relieved or assisted by the sacrifice of the mass and by the prayers of the faithful on earth. All these and similar errors were held by the Roman Catholic Church before the Reformation and are held by that Church to this day. From this brief account of the doctrinal corruptions which prevailed for many hundreds of years, it will readily be seen that a Reformation, which would restore the pure doctrines of the Word of God was an imperative necessity.

In addition to these corruptions of Christian doctrine must be mentioned the errors of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the form, organization, and government of the Church. Rome teaches that to the true and essential unity of the Church there necessarily belongs, not only unity of doctrine, but also unity in organization and church usages. It was taught, that the one Church (i. e. the Romish) cannot err, since she is governed and directed by

the Holy Ghost. According to the decision of the Vatican Council, held in 1870, infallibility belongs to the pope, who, as the successor of St. Peter, is the visible head of the Church and Christ's vicar on earth. Furthermore Rome teaches, that outside of this one (i. e. the Roman Catholic) Church there is no salvation; that the clergy is an order essentially different from the laity; that an "indelible character" is impressed upon the priests by reason of their ordination, and similar errors. Thus the papacy not only corrupted the doctrines concerning Christian faith and life, but had also produced fatal errors with reference to the form and government of the Church.

CHAPTER V.

The Effects of the Corruption of Christian Doctrines on the Clergy and Laity.

The sad effects of the corruption of Christian doctrine and of the ignorance in religious or spiritual matters, everywhere prevailing in those dark and gloomy days before the Reformation, were made manifest in the daily life and conduct of all classes of the people, whether clergy or laity. Public and private morals had sunk to the lowest depths among all classes. Many popes, prelates, priests and monks were monsters of iniquity, from a contemplation of whose crimes the human mind turns away with unutterable loathing and disgust. The priests had sunk so low, that the honor of females was not safe even in the confessional.

Many popes were guilty of the grossest crimes. Pope Boniface VII. (A. D. 974) caused his predecessor, Benedict VII., to be strangled to death. He also robbed the churches of Rome of all their treasures of gold and silver. Pope Sylvester II. (A. D. 998-1003) was a wicked sorcerer and necromancer. Pope Gregory VII., the celebrated Hildebrand, (1073-1085), was a vile monster of carnal lust and cruelty. Pope Innocent III. (A. D. 1198-1216) had thousands of Albigenses, who were accused of heresy, murdered in cold blood. Pope Innocent IV. (A. D. 1241-1254), instigated the servants of Emperor Frederick II. to murder that monarch. The wicked plot was discovered, but the emperor was afterward poisoned, doubtless at the pope's instigation. Pope John XXIII. (A. D. 1410-1415), who was afterwards deposed, had been in his youth a notorious pirate, and when he had become pope was guilty of gross crimes against chastity. Pope Alexander VI. (A. D. 1492-1503), was one of the vilest, most sensual and cruel monsters of wickedness that ever disgraced the human race. He lived in open adultery and incest. Pope Leo X. (A. D. 1513-1521) was a blasphemous unbeliever and scoffer of the Christian religion, who once said, that he believed that man after death perished like a brute. Of the Gospel of Christ this wicked pope mockingly said: "O how much money hath this fable brought us!"

The lives of the other members of the Romish hierarchy were equally corrupt and depraved. At the celebrated general Church Council held in Constance in 1414 and several years following, which

convocation was attended by 346 archbishops and bishops, together with 545 abbots and doctors of theology, more than 7,000 courtesans had followed the "holy fathers" to the city. Infamous priests lived in open concubinage under the sanction of a papal "dispensation" or permit, which could easily be obtained for money. It is not surprising then that the moral condition of the common people had sunk to the lowest possible point, and that the grossest immorality prevailed. So great was the universal corruption in life and morals that the renowned Cardinal Bellarmine (born 1542, died 1621), one of the highest and ablest authorities of the Church of Rome, a professor of theology and writer of many works, expressly declares, that according to the general testimony of contemporaneous authors there was, in the years preceding the Reformation, no wisdom or sagacity in the tribunals of the Church, no discipline in the manners of the people, no correct knowledge of spiritual things, no true reverence for divine objects, and scarcely any religion left in the world. The most vicious, depraved, and immoral popes were worshiped and adored by the people as vicegerents of Christ, and His vicars on earth. Corrupted and debased priests who stank with iniquity, were revered as saints, whilst the innumerable convents and cloisters, monasteries and nunneries, were loathsome dens of infamy and kennels of abominations which cannot be mentioned. Thus the corruption of Christian doctrine naturally produced corruption of life and morals.

CHAPTER VI.

The Condition of Civil and Political Affairs and the Prevailing Superstitions Before the Reformation.

The condition of civil, governmental and political affairs before the Reformation of the sixteenth century was miserable indeed. The sovereign pontiff at Rome not only held in bondage the minds, souls and consciences of men with false doctrines and human traditions, but he also presumptuously stretched forth his hand to usurp civil and political power over empires, kingdoms, provinces and states, claiming to be not only the supreme ruler of the spiritual, but also of the political world. He boldly assumed the right to depose at his will emperors and kings, princes and potentates, rulers and governors, to absolve or release subjects or citizens from their political allegiance to their secular governments and to give lands and countries to his favorites. Formerly, when an earthly ruler was put under the ban or excommunication of the pope, the whole nation or country of the ruler was placed under the *interdict*, that is, the celebration of divine service, the administration of the sacraments, the performance of churchly burial, the ringing of church-bells, in brief, all churchly observances, were strictly forbidden whilst the sentence of ex-communication was in force.

Thus the pope, not satisfied with exercising unlimited power in spiritual or religious matters,

also assumed the most despotic and absolute power in worldly affairs. Pope Martin IV. in 1282 excommunicated Pedro, king of Arragon, because he had defended his hereditary claim to the kingdom of Sicily against the pretensions of Charles the First. The pope promised to all who supported Charles in his war against Pedro an indulgence for all their sins. Finally he deposed Charles himself and bestowed the kingdoms of Arragon and Sicily upon his favorite, Charles of Valois, for the stipulated annual payment of a certain sum of money. Pope Clement IV. sold millions of inhabitants in Southern Italy to Charles, Count of Anjou, for the annual payment of a tribute, amounting to 8,000 ounces of gold. In 1265 the pope declared that if the count failed to pay the first annual installment, he should be excommunicated, and that if he failed to promptly pay the second installment, the inhabitants of the country should be put under the papal interdict; that is, they should be deprived of all churchly privileges until the ban was removed. Many popes even condemned political opinions not in harmony with the policy of Rome. In the year 1215 Innocent III. declared that the charter of English rights and liberty, the Magna Charta, was null and void, and even had the brazen effrontery and sublime audacity to put the authors of the Magna Charta under the curse of papal excommunication.

The manners and customs of the people, especially of the lower and uneducated classes, were generally very low, coarse, and rude in those days. This need not surprise us when we take into con-

sideration the general superstition and ignorance, the want of facilities for obtaining proper instruction for the youth of the common people, the turbulent condition of the times with reference to religious, social and political matters, the oppression of the people by despotic princes and tyrannical prelates, and many other causes. Cardinal Bellarmine simply stated the plain, evident truth when he said that in those days there was no discipline of good manners among the people. Only pure Christianity can really civilize man and refine his manners. Where the religion of Christ prevails barbarism must vanish.

The superstition universally prevailing before the Reformation was of the grossest kind. This was the logical result of the false, absurd, unscriptural and unevangelical teachings of ignorant monks and priests. The belief in the healing efficacy of sacred relics, such as the pretended bones of saints and martyrs, of their garments and of other so-called sacred and consecrated objects, was general. Relics, which in almost every case were spurious, were venerated by the people and believed to possess miraculous powers. Among an immense number of relics kept in the town of Halle in Germany were alleged pieces of the wood of Noah's ark, fragments of the stone struck by Moses in the wilderness, a few remnants of hay on which the infant Jesus had lain, small portions of the frankincense and myrrh brought to the child Jesus by the three wise men of the East, a small quantity of the wine which Christ had miraculously made at the marriage of Cana, the table-cloth used

by the Lord at the institution of the holy Supper, one of the pieces of money for which Judas betrayed his Master, and many other things. How great must have been the spiritual blindness of that age, when foolish monks and priests led poor, credulous souls into the dark mazes of a senseless and debasing superstition!

Before the Reformation many absurd and blasphemous observances, sanctioned by the clergy, were in vogue among the people. There was the feast of the ass which consisted in the representation of a little drama in the principal scene of which Balaam's ass, (a priest concealed between the legs of an ass,) appeared before the altar of the church and predicted the coming of Christ. The feast of fools, a continuation of the Pagan *saturnalia*, consisted in the election of a boy-bishop, who conducted services in the church, interspersing the liturgical acts with travesties and parodies of the grossest kind, to the amusement of the congregation. These blasphemous plays became so notoriously offensive that they were formally abolished. On the festival of Easter priests would relate to their audiences ridiculous fables, saying that when Christ descended into hell and came to the gate, two devils had bolted it with their long noses, but that the Lord, knocking at the gate with His cross, broke off the noses of the demons. Where the Gospel of Christ is not known the greatest absurdities are readily believed and accepted as true.

CHAPTER VII.

Attempts to Abolish Abuses in the Church Before the Reformation.

From what has been said it will be perceived that the prospects for a change for the better in the condition of the Church were not very promising before the Reformation. A thorough change "in head and members" was a necessity demanded by a thousand considerations. It is true that even in that dark age the Lord God had His people, held and bound in the Babylon of the papacy, and that a few men eminent for their piety and learning attempted to abolish the more flagrant abuses in the Church. Of such men we mention especially four as being the most prominent; namely, John Wickliffe of England, (born 1324, died 1384). John Huss of Bohemia, (born according to some authors 1369, according to others 1372, died at the stake in Constance in 1415), Jerome of Prague, (born about 1365, died at the stake in Constance in 1416), and Girolamo Savonarola of Italy, (born 1452, died 1498). These men attempted to remove certain abuses and to introduce certain reforms in particular directions, but they cannot properly be called Reformers; because their attempts, although well meant, did not really strike at the root of the fundamental error of the papacy, but were chiefly directed at the more manifest and open abuses then prevailing in the Church.

Wickliffe, who has been called "the morning star of the Reformation," attacked the mendicant

orders (begging monks), defended the political independence of the English crown against the aggression of Pope Urban V., translated the Bible into English, and wrote and preached against the Romish error of transubstantiation. "But one cardinal doctrine of modern evangelical Christendom is not found in his sermons: He has not a word to say about justification by faith." (Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, article Wickliffe). Huss, who is generally considered a disciple of Wickliffe, was a man of Christian faith, earnestness, purity and humility, but did not possess the qualities necessary for a thorough-going Reformer of the Church. Although he approved the communion under both kinds, the scriptural practice of giving the cup to the laity as well as to the clergy in the administration of the holy Supper, yet he did not oppose the false doctrine of transubstantiation, though he was charged with doing so by his Romish enemies. Jerome of Prague studied at Oxford and returned to Bohemia, bringing with him Wickliffe's theological writings. He greatly encouraged Huss in his opposition to popery, and promised him his assistance, if necessary, at the Council of Constance, but acting on the advice of Bohemian noblemen, who feared that his life was in danger, he fled from Constance on the day following his arrival. He was recognized at the town of Hirschau by his bold denunciation of the Council and taken back to Constance, a prisoner in chains. After Huss' death at the stake, Jerome, in a moment of weakness, was induced to retract his "heresy," but the day following withdrew his retraction. At a second trial before the Council he

was condemned to be burnt at the stake and died joyfully and heroically. Savonarola was the bold originator and unfortunate victim of a churchly-political movement in Florence, Italy. He was a fiery, zealous, and impulsive agitator, who unsparingly denounced the sins of the clergy and laity, but in all the essential doctrinal points he fully agreed with the false and unscriptural system of Rome. By order of the commissioners of Pope Alexander VI. he was burnt at a stake in the form of a cross, in the city of Florence, April 7, 1498.

It is evident that none of these men, well-meant, earnest and zealous, as their efforts were, possessed the intellectual and moral qualities necessary for effecting so vast, so thorough and so comprehensive a work as the Reformation of the sixteenth century was destined to be. In His own appointed time and in His own way, God, the almighty and all-wise Disposer of all things, would raise up the man, who in the power of the Lord of hosts should strike the death-blow, from which the Romish Antichrist would never recover. In no event of modern history is the overruling hand of Providence so plainly discernible as in the Reformation of the Church. This great work was not accomplished by human foresight, wisdom, craft or policy. *This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Zech. IV. 6.*

The *humanists*, a class of learned men, living before and during the time of the Reformation, such as Laurentius Valla, Reuchlin, Erasmus, and others, were not reformers. They were literary men, eminent scholars, not theologians and preach-

ers. They restored the study of Hebrew and Greek, greatly improved the common European languages, advocated and encouraged a more liberal and thorough education and thus furnished much valuable material for the coming Reformation. Erasmus, one of the most celebrated of this class of men, was weak and vascillating with regard to the Reformation of the Church. It is true that many of the humanists sympathized with the Reformation, but it is certain that they would never have effected it.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Seat of the Disease in the Roman Catholic Church.

It has been observed that all the earlier attempts to bring about a better and purer condition of the Church in doctrine and life had been chiefly directed toward a removal of some of the more manifest abuses. But the seat of the evil lay much deeper than was supposed by those pious and learned men, who labored to effect a change for the better. The fundamental error of the Roman Catholic Church does not consist merely in teaching and practicing plain and palpable abuses and superstitions, but much rather in adhering so tenaciously to the God-dishonoring, unscriptural and unevangelical doctrine of self-righteousness, or the supposed meritoriousness of human works, as the necessary condition of righteousness in the sight of God. This error is the corrupt leaven of Romanism which permeates, vitiates, and infects almost every doctrine. Before the Reformation the pure

evangelical doctrine of justification by faith alone was buried, as it were, under a huge mass of rubbish, composed of Pharisaic self-righteousness and shallow legalism. All the other errors of Romanism were simply the natural results of the fatal corruption of the doctrine of justification by faith. The disease had affected the very vitals of the Church long before the Reformation, and hence it was necessary that the remedy, in order to effect a permanent cure, should be one that would reach the seat of the disease.

It is true that under the providence of God a number of causes served to prepare the way for the Reformation. The revival of the study of the ancient languages and classical literature, the invention of the art of printing and the consequent increase of the number of books, the constantly growing commercial intercourse between the nations of Europe, the almost universal demand for better instruction in every branch of knowledge, the general longing for a better and purer condition of Church and society in general, the struggles and labors of Wickliffe, Huss, and others, to remove abuses and to restore purity in doctrine and practice, and other causes, had a tendency to prepare the minds of men for that grand religious movement, the Reformation through Martin Luther. But this movement could not be thrust upon men in a sudden and violent manner. God brought about the Reformation of the Church according to the good and wise counsel of His Will, after having prepared the way for it by many events, which were progressive steps in the accomplishment of His gracious designs.

PART II.

THE BEGINNING OF THE REFORMATION.

**FROM THE PUBLICATION OF THE NINETY-FIVE THESES BY
MARTIN LUTHER TO THE BURNING OF THE PAPAL
BULL. A. D. 1517 - 1520.**

CHAPTER I.

The Birthday of a New Era in the Church.

The thirty-first day of October, A. D. 1517, saw the beginning of that great religious movement, which by the grace of God was to result in the emancipation of His children, who had been held in bondage under the tyranny of the Romish Antichrist, and in the restoration of the true Christian doctrine to the Church. At 12 o'clock of noon, on that day, a multitude of people, both clergy and laity, had congregated in the streets of the city of Wittenberg, near the Elbe in Saxony. On tomorrow, the first of November, being All Saints day, the anniversary of the dedication of the castle-church or cathedral, as a church consecrated to all saints, would be celebrated. The people, who had flocked from all parts of the surrounding country, stood in large groups along the main street leading from the market place to the castle, waiting for the evening services to begin. Before the church-bells began to ring, a monk, clad in the somber habit of

the order of St. Augustine, was seen pressing through the crowd and eagerly pursuing his way to the main portals of the church, where he stopped. He drew from his monk's gown in a writing which he nailed to the door of the cathedral, and then quietly withdrew from the public gaze. At first the action of the silent monk did not attract any special attention, because in those days it was an academical custom to announce philosophical and theological disputations at the universities by posting written notices on the doors of the churches.

After the monk had departed, some persons standing near the church door went up to read the announcement just placed there. The writing proved to be a series of theses or propositions, ninety-five in number, on the subject of papal indulgences. Concerning such indulgences it was taught, that the blessed saints whilst on earth had, by reason of their many good works, accumulated indulgences. Concerning such indulgences it was needed for their own justification, and that this surplus of merit could be used for the benefit of such persons as had accomplished less good than was necessary for their justification. The pope, who assumed to be the vicar of Christ on earth, blasphemously claimed that he had received authority from God to draw from this great treasury of the saints' merits, and to apply the benefits thereof to those persons who had shown themselves worthy by rendering works of penance, such as fasting, prayers, alms, and the like. But in a short time sorrow and rendering penance for sin were entirely dispensed with, and the treasure of the

saints was sold for money to any one who would buy, and in this way began the shameless traffic in indulgences, which proved to be a great source of revenue to the Church.

CHAPTER II.

The Sale of Papal Indulgences.

Leo X., son of Lorenzo de Medici, was elected to succeed Pope Julius II., March 11, 1513. After the example of his predecessor, Leo greatly favored the sale of indulgences, which were blasphemously accounted as new means of grace, but were in fact sharp practices of obtaining money for the pope and his favorites. A good pretext for this unholy traffic was afforded by the threatened attack upon Christian Europe by the Sultan of Turkey. Resistance to the Turks entitled the soldier to a papal indulgence. But the completion of the unfinished Church of St. Peter's at Rome, which required enormous sums of money, was a more serious consideration with pope Leo than the war against the Turkish sultan. In order to obtain funds to complete the grandest of all churches in Christendom, the pope ordered the sale of indulgences to be carried on with greater vigor and energy than ever before.

As the chief business manager in this base traffic, the pope appointed the Archduke and Archbishop Albert (Albrecht), of Mayence, by descent a prince of Brandenburg, a man who loved a display of great splendor at his court. He very will-

ingly became the pope's manager in the indulgence business, for he received a very liberal share of the profits.

But it was necessary that Albert of Mayence should have subordinates to carry on the traffic in the most efficient manner among all classes of people. Such traders and venders were soon found. The most vigorous and successful, as well as the most unscrupulous among them all, was the Dominican monk, John Tetzel, of Pirna in Saxony. This man had already served as a preacher of indulgences and had done a profitable business in the sale of so-called "milk and butter letters," that is, certificates granting to all who bought them the permission to partake during the Lenten season of victuals prepared in part of butter and milk, thus dispensing with a law of the Church concerning fasting and abstinence. Tetzel was by nature well qualified for the contemptible calling of indulgence-broker. He was pompous in his appearance, boisterous in his manners, possessed a loud, strong voice, and well understood how to talk to the lower classes. His dense ignorance was concealed beneath a never-failing audacity, and his ridiculous lies and monstrous exaggerations were dressed up in the garb of a most refreshing simplicity. This clerical mountebank traveled round about Magdeburg, Halberstadt, Zerbst and Halle, and the surrounding country in a magnificent carriage, attended by a body guard, like some distinguished prelate. He was met at the gates of towns and cities by the clergy, the civil authorities, teachers and pupils, men and women and children, with the

highest honors. The papal bull, the writing authorizing the sale of indulgences, was carried at the head of the procession on a velvet cushion and taken into the church. Tetzal would mount the pulpit and extol the wonderful efficacy of his wares. He would say: "Now, now is the day of grace come to your very doors! Ye women, sell your veils and purchase indulgences with the proceeds." He fixed a certain, definite tax upon each sin and misdemeanor. Sacrilege or church-robbery and perjury were rated each at nine ducats; a murder already committed, at eight ducats, and adultery at six ducats. (The silver ducat was equal in value to one dollar of our money and the gold ducat to about twice that amount.) The shameless monk sold to the ignorant, credulous people letters with the papal seal, assuring them that even those sins which they might intend to commit in the future should be forgiven them by indulgences. He boldly declared that the pope was equal to Christ and highly exalted over saints and angels, yea, even over the Virgin Mary herself, and that the Lord had committed to the pope, as His vicar or vicergerent on earth, the whole government of the Church. Among the shocking, blasphemous, and God-dishonoring doctrines preached by Tetzal were the following which we copy from Moritz Meuer's *Life of Luther* (pp. 44, 45):

"That the red indulgence-cross, erected in the churches, with the pope's armorial bearing on it, was just as efficacious as the cross of Christ. Again: That if St. Peter were here now, he would not have greater grace or power than he (Tetzal)

had! Again: That he would not in heaven exchange with St. Peter, for that he had saved more souls with his indulgences than St. Peter by his preaching! Again: That if any one cast money into the box for a soul in purgatory, the soul would fly up to heaven as soon as the coin tinkled at the bottom! Again: That the grace of indulgences is the very grace through which man is reconciled to God! Again: That it was not necessary to feel sorrow and grief on account of sin, or to repent, if one purchased the indulgences or letters of indulgence!"

At this time Martin Luther, as he himself relates, "was preacher in the cloister here (Wittenberg) and a young doctor but lately from the mint, ardent and joyful in the Holy Scriptures." With some reserve he had already preached against indulgences in the Castle Church and refused to absolve certain persons who came to him for confession, and who trusted for forgiveness in the letters of indulgence they had already purchased from Tetzel. These persons were very audacious toward Luther, their confessor, and intimated that they would not abstain from such gross sins as adultery, fornication, avarice, and the like. They would appeal to their letters of papal indulgence and trust in Tetzel's forgiveness. But Luther cared nothing for all this and said to these bold, impenitent persons: "If ye do not repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13, 3. Tetzel, hearing what Luther had done, denounced him in violent language, and in order to excite fear and terror in the minds of the people, caused a fire to be kindled

in the town of Jueterbock, where he then was selling indulgences, to show that had authority from Leo X. to burn at the stake all stubborn heretics, who would not believe in the wonderful efficacy of the precious papal letters he was selling.

CHAPTER III.

Luther Begins the War Against Indulgences.

Thus did Tetzal, this miserable mountebank, by his shameless audacity and shocking blasphemy, cause the young doctor, "lately from the mint," to buckle on the armor of God and to take the sword of the Spirit into his hand, in order to attack the papal indulgences as dangerous frauds and fatal delusions. About this time Luther also wrote a letter to the Bishop of Magdeburg, containing the ninety-five theses, which he afterward nailed to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg, requesting the prelate to put a stop to Tetzal's scandalous proceedings; but to this letter Luther received no answer. The latter likewise wrote to the Bishop of Brandenburg, who replied that Luther "was attacking the power of the Church, and would involve himself in trouble, and that he would advise him to abstain."

Luther finding that all his appeals to the prelates of the Church were fruitless, and that they would do nothing toward putting a stop to the wicked sale of indulgences, now felt himself bound by his solemn oath as a Doctor of Divinity to publish his propositions and arguments contained in

the above-mentioned ninety-five theses, and first of all to post them on the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg, as has already been narrated. Only the substance of these theses can be given in this place.

In the introduction Luther declares that "a love and desire to bring to light the truth" moved him to discuss the matter, and that "he therefore prays all that cannot be present to converse with him on the subject, to communicate to him their views by writing." It is then affirmed, "that the whole earthly life of His (Christ's) believers should be a continual repentance; that this scriptural repentance neither can nor may be understood of the (Roman Catholic) sacrament of penance, i. e., of confession and satisfaction," that the pope can only remit such punishment for sins as are imposed by the laws of the Church; that he "can forgive no sin, further than to declare and confirm what is forgiven of God," and that "the preachers of indulgences err when they say that through the indulgences of the pope a man is freed from all punishment and will be saved." Furthermore it is declared that those persons and their teachers will be lost forever, "who, because of their letters of indulgence, consider themselves certain of their salvation;" that men must be on their guard against those who declare "that the indulgence of the pope is the greatest and most precious divine grace or gift, by which man is reconciled to God;" that every repenting person has complete forgiveness of sin without a letter of indulgence; that to trust in indulgences "is trusting in vanity and false-

hood," and that "*the real and true treasure of the Church is the Most Holy Gospel of the majesty and grace of God.*" Finally, it is declared, that "the pope's indulgences are not able to take away the very smallest sin, as far as its guilt is concerned;" that "Christians must be exhorted to follow after Christ, their Head, through affliction, death and hell," and that they "therefore must expect to enter into heaven rather through tribulation than false peace." In the conclusion Luther acknowledged himself to be the author of these theses. And inasmuch as some "forward and conceited persons" had ventured to denounce him as a heretic, he asked any one "for the sake of the Christian faith" to show him a better way, or to submit to the judgment of God and of the Church.

At the time of the publication of these theses Luther was yet willing to submit the matter of indulgences to the decision of the pope, who, as he then supposed, was not aware of the shameful conduct of Tetzl. The thought never entered the mind of the humble Augustinian monk to set himself up in opposition to the supreme pontiff and head of the Church on earth. This is plainly evident from a number of the theses on indulgences. Luther accorded to the pope the right to remit the punishment imposed on penitents by the laws of the Church and admitted that the pope exercised a general power over purgatory. He declared that the pope's dispensation or forgiveness was by no means to be despised, and that the indulgences of the pope were good as dispensations from the punishments imposed by the Church.

In the fiftieth thesis it is said: "Christians are to be taught, that if the pope knew of the flaying, practiced by the preachers of indulgences (Luther means the traffic in indulgences by Tetzels and others,) he would much rather see St. Peter's Cathedral burned to the ground, than to have it erected with the skin, flesh, and bone of his sheep." It is seen that Luther at this time had no thought of questioning the authority of the pope.

The posting of the ninety-five theses on the door of the Church at Wittenberg, on the thirty-first day of October, A. D. 1517, was the beginning of the Reformation. A new era had begun for the Church and the world. The time had fully come when the light of the Word of God should again break upon a world enveloped in gross darkness. The showers of Divine grace were about to be poured out upon the parched field of the Church. The long continued Babylonian captivity of God's people, who were languishing under the tyranny of Antichrist, was about to end, and the captives were to be set free. But little did the humble Augustinian monk dream what great and mighty results were to follow the first publication of his modest theses. He yet highly revered the pope and persuaded himself to believe that he was innocent of the scandalous conduct of Tetzels and other venders of indulgences, and that if the supreme pontiff were properly informed, he would disapprove of the unholy traffic.

The Reformation of the Church was not to be accomplished in a day. It was a movement which was to grow and increase until it reached its fulness

and maturity. Hence Luther was led by the providence of God, step by step, to see the utter corruption of the whole papal system and the imperative necessity of a return of the Church to the purity of faith and doctrine. As he increased in the knowledge of the Divine Truth, he was the better enabled to effect the work of the Reformation, and to restore to the Church the precious treasures contained in the Word of God. Hence his labors were not irregular and spasmodic, but patient and persevering, untiring and progressive. He laid the foundation of the mighty work, wide and deep and strong, on the immutable Word of God. In all he did he suffered himself to be led by the hand of God, desiring to be nothing but an instrument in His hand. By the irresistible "logic of events," ordered and directed by God's eternal omniscience and omnipotence, Luther was carried far beyond his first intentions and led into an irrepressible and irreconcilable conflict with the highest authority in the Church of Rome, the pope.

CHAPTER IV.

Luther's Childhood, Youth, and early Training.

We will pause in the narration of the events of the Reformation to consider the man whom God had chosen to be His instrument in carrying out His purpose of purifying the Church and restoring the true Christian doctrine. Martin Luther, the son of John Luther and Margaret, his wife, was born on St. Martin's eve, November 10th, in the

year of grace 1483, at Eisleben, a town then subject to the Counts of Mansfeld and situated near the Harz mountain, not far from Wittenberg in Saxony. John Luther, a poor miner, had formerly been a peasant. His son Martin once said: "I am the son of a farmer. My father, grandfather and great-grandfather, all were farmers. Subsequently my father removed to Mansfeld, and there was engaged in mining." Two sons of John Luther died of the plague in the year 1505; another son, Jacob, lived to reach mature years. When John Luther lived at Mansfeld his family consisted of six children, besides Martin. Father Luther was highly esteemed by the citizens of Mansfeld for his honesty and uprightness, and by his industry and frugality became the proprietor of two smelting-furnaces. He gained the confidence of his fellow-citizens, who elected him a member of the town-council. Martin Luther's mother, whose family name was Ziegler, was a pious and virtuous woman, distinguished for the propriety of her conduct and exemplary life, but rather stern and austere in her manners.

Luther's parents brought up their son in the fear of the Lord, but being somewhat severe in their discipline Martin grew exceedingly timid. At a proper age he was sent to the Latin school, where he learned the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, beside the rudiments of Latin and a few hymns. John Luther frequently and fervently prayed to God to grant his son grace, that being mindful of his name ("Luther" is the same as "lauter," the German for

pure), he might be instrumental in advancing the pure doctrine. In his fourteenth year Martin was sent to Magdeburg, where he attended the school of the Franciscans, called the "Null Brothers." Here he remained but a single year, when he entered the school at Eisenach. There he studied four years under the direction of the excellent rector, John Trebonius. Melanchthon, afterwards Luther's friend and helper in the work of the Reformation, said that at Eisenach the student Martin manifested "a keen power of intellect and was, above all, gifted for eloquence." But as he was in straitened circumstances, as well as many of the other students, he would sing before the houses of the citizens, asking for bread for God's sake (*panem propter Deum*). Attracting the attention of a pious woman, Ursula, the wife of Conrad Cotta, by his rich tenor voice and his earnest and devout prayer at Church, she took him to her table and kindly cared for him. By reason of his superior mental faculties and his earnest application to his tasks at school, Luther soon excelled his fellow-students especially in linguistic exercises.

In the year 1501 Martin Luther entered the university at Erfurt. His father, who now prospered in business as the proprietor of two furnaces at Mansfeld, was enabled to maintain his son in a becoming manner. At Erfurt Martin privately read the ancient Latin authors, as Ovid, Virgil, Cicero, and others. He read these works for the sake of the information they contained and the mirror of human life they presented to the student. One day, whilst engaged in examining the

books in the library in order to select for his reading the most valuable works, he met with a complete Latin Bible, a copy of which he had never before seen, although he was then in his twentieth year! He was greatly astonished to find that there was much more in the Bible than was explained in the postils or preached of in the churches. Carefully and attentively turning over the leaves of the sacred volume, he came upon the beautiful story of young Samuel and his pious mother Hannah, and as all this was so new and interesting to him, he eagerly read it with sincere pleasure, earnestly asking God to give him such a book some day.

Luther obtained the bachelor's degree in the year 1503. This was the first degree in philosophical honors. Two years afterwards he took the higher degree of Master of Philosophy—a degree correspondingly to our Doctor of Philosophy. His father desired that he should become a lawyer, but God in His infinite wisdom willed it otherwise. In 1503 a great misfortune befell the student Martin Luther. He was journeying homeward to his parents, when by an accident his foot struck against his sword which flew out of its sheath and severed one of the larger arteries. He was a considerable distance from Erfurt and there was but a single companion with him. The blood flowing from the wound at a fearful rate, he threw himself on his back, at the same time pressing a finger against the wound. In the agony of his soul and in expectation of a speedy death he cried with great earnestness to the mother of our Lord: "Mary, help!"

He was conveyed back to Erfurt and the wound properly bandaged. But during the night it opened again and the blood beginning to flow he fainted away, calling upon the Virgin Mary to help him. He afterward said: "At that time I would have died in full reliance upon Mary."

CHAPTER V.

Luther Becomes a Monk.

On the evening of July 16, 1505, a few intimate friends met at the room of Martin Luther in Erfurt to pass a social evening. The plague which a short time before had raged so violently in the city, had abated and cheerfulness once more prevailed among the citizens and students. After having spent a few hours in friendly conversation, interspersed with singing and music, Martin, in a solemn and impressive manner, bade his friends farewell, telling them that on the morrow he would enter the Augustinian monastery as a novice. At first some of his friends treated this sudden announcement as a jest, whilst others, who rightly believed him to be in earnest, tried to dissuade him from his intention. But all remonstrances were unavailing. "To-day," he said, "you see me; after this you will see me no more." The friends separated and on the following day the young Master of Philosophy knocked at the portals of the Augustinian cloister. He was admitted at once and the gates were closed, shutting him off from the world. Martin Luther became a novice of the order of St. Augustine.

His friends were astonished beyond measure. They literally besieged the cloister for two days, hoping to regain him, but the doors were not opened to them and for a whole month no one from the outside was permitted to see him. His father, a plain and eminently practical man, very decided in his convictions and strenuously opposed to the whole monastic system, was deeply grieved, and in a letter to his infatuated son declared that he would withdraw from him his fatherly favor and good will. A short time after this an epidemic disease suddenly took away two of Father Luther's sons, and he received the sad intelligence that Martin was lying sick of the same disease. The friends of Martin's father now urged him to sacrifice his personal wishes concerning the future of his son and to consent to the step the latter had taken. The father finally relented and said: "Be it so! God grant that he may do well." Yet the sturdy old Saxon miner did not consent willingly to the persuasions of his friends.

Martin Luther was now, as it were, dead to the world, buried alive in a gloomy, cheerless cloister. It is true that his decision was suddenly formed, yet he had considered it long and earnestly. Many causes impelled him to enter the monastery. His disposition naturally inclined toward a quiet, contemplative life. The severe training at home had sharpened his tender conscience and made him timid and reserved. He was not satisfied with the ordinary ceremonial routine of the Church. Involved in numerous doubts on religious questions, he longed for higher attainments in true holiness

and could not rest content with a superficial religious life as taught and practiced by the Church. Terrors of conscience and fear of death preyed heavily on his terrified soul. All these causes and many others of a similar nature prompted the young Magister to don the garb of the Augustinian order, the black cowl with the scapulary.

It had been the desire of John Luther that his son should become a celebrated jurist, but now he was the humble novice of a monastic order. As such it was his duty to perform the lowest menial services, in order, as it was said, to break his self-will. The novice, Magister Luther, who upon entering the cloister had laid aside his baptismal name and was now called Augustinus, assisted in cleaning the cells of the monks. At other times he could be seen with a beggar's sack, going through the streets of Erfurt, soliciting food and money for the use of the monks. But the vicar of the Augustinians, the excellent John von Staupitz, interposed in his behalf and secured for him better treatment and more time for his studies. And now he entered upon a diligent study of the Bible with so much zeal that in a short time he could turn immediately to any desired passage, to the great astonishment of his noble patron and friend, Staupitz. Thus God was preparing the "solitary monk that shook the world" for the great work of the Reformation.

CHAPTER VI.

The Inward Trials of Luther in the Cloister.

At the expiration of his novitiate at the end of a year, Luther was solemnly received into the monastic order of St. Augustine. In the year 1507 he was ordained a priest. His father was present at his ordination and at the subsequent festivities. When the young priest asked his father, why he had refused to give his consent to his son's entering the monastery, and whether he did not believe that the life of a priest was an agreeable, quiet and holy life, plain John Luther, in the presence of learned doctors and magistrates, said: "Ye learned men, have you not read the Scriptures that it is commanded to honor father and mother?" When Martin remarked that he was led to enter the cloister by an awful sign from heaven, his father replied: "God grant that it may not have been a deception and delusion of the devil!"

When Luther had been ordained a priest, his brethren in the cloister took from him his Bible, and gave him instead the works of the Romish scholastics, which he read with great diligence. By intense application to study, repeating long prayers, long fasting, and other monastic exercises, he was deprived of sleep and almost became deranged. On one occasion he locked himself up in his room and would not permit any one to come to him for several days. Finally a few friends broke open the door of his cell and found him lying senseless on the floor. By means of music, in which he always

greatly delighted, he was brought to consciousness again. Luther afterward said of his monastic life: "I speak what is true when I say, I was a pious monk, and so strictly observed the rules of my order that I can declare, if ever monk by monastic exercises obtained salvation, I would have obtained it too."

But he found no rest for his soul in all his monkish exercises. He studied and prayed day and night and mortified his flesh with vigils and severe fasting. He labored under the awful delusion that he could satisfy the demands of God's holy and righteous Law by his own obedience and good works and thus liberate himself from eternal condemnation. But the more he labored and struggled the more he was terrified and cast down, so that he could well say:

"By Satan bound, I captive lay,
In death, I was forsaken;
My sins distressed me night and day,
My conscience they'd awaken.
But I sunk only more and more;
There was no good in me, and sore
Had sin my heart corrupted.

Good works I did were not received,
For sin with good was mated;
God's Word free-will had not believed,
And all that's good it hated;
Thus terror drove me to despair,
Of nought but death was I the heir,
To hell I fast was sinking."

(From "Nun freut euch, liebe Christen g'mein." Moritz Meurer's Life of Martin Luther. p. 24.)

On a certain occasion, when Luther was very despondent Dr. Staupitz greatly comforted him, saying: "You wish to be an imaginary sinner and to take Christ for an imaginary Savior; accustom yourself to think that Christ is a true Savior and that you are a real sinner. God does not play with shadows, and does not trifle when He sends us His Son and gives Him for us." At another time, when Luther felt great distress whilst reflecting on the subject of predestination, Staupitz said to him: "In the wounds of Christ predestination is understood and found, but nowhere else. For it is written: *Hear ye him!* Therefore only cling to the Word in which God has revealed Himself and abide in the same; there you have the true way of salvation, if you only believe Him."

When Luther one day complained of his spiritual troubles to an old cloister-brother, the latter pointed him to the words of the Apostles' Creed: "*I believe in the forgiveness of sins,*" This he explained thus: "It is not enough to believe in general, that the sins of some men are forgiven . . . but God will have every one to believe that his own sins are forgiven." By these instructions Luther was greatly comforted in his distress and was led to inquire more diligently into the cause of the sinner's justification. He read and compared the passages recorded in the Bible on this subject and discovered how meager and deficient the comments of the Romish scholastics were. He also read with much profit the writings of St. Augustine and Gerson, especially the former.

CHAPTER VII.

Luther is Called as Professor to Wittenberg and Makes a Journey to Rome.

Duke Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, founded the University of Wittenberg in the year 1502. This excellent prince, one of the noblest and best men of the sixteenth century, sought to advance the cause of learning and to promote the general welfare of his people. Having established a seat of learning, he was now concerned in procuring eminent teachers for that institution. Acting upon the advice of Staupitz, the noble friend of Luther, the Elector called the latter to Wittenberg in 1508 as Professor at the University.

Luther accepted the call and departed so suddenly from Erfurt to his new field of labor, that even his most intimate friends scarcely heard of it at the time. The town of Wittenberg, in contrast with Erfurt, probably made an unfavorable impression upon the young Professor at the time. Upon assuming the duties of his office, Luther began teaching the philosophical sciences, although this was not altogether agreeable to him. He would much have preferred the chair of theology, that is, true biblical theology, "which penetrates to the kernel of the nut, the pulp of the wheat and the marrow of the bones." "But," said he, "God is God, and man often, yea, always errs in his judgment." He diligently prepared himself for obtaining the several theological degrees and was made Bachelor of Theology in 1509. He now began to

hold disputations against the sophistical principles in philosophy, which at that time prevailed in all the universities. He esteemed the Word of God more than all the sophistry and theology of the Scholastics. Dr. Mellerstadt often said: "This monk will confound all our doctors, establish new doctrines and reform the whole Roman Church, for he bases himself on the writing of the Prophets and Apostles and is firmly planted on the Word of Jesus Christ."

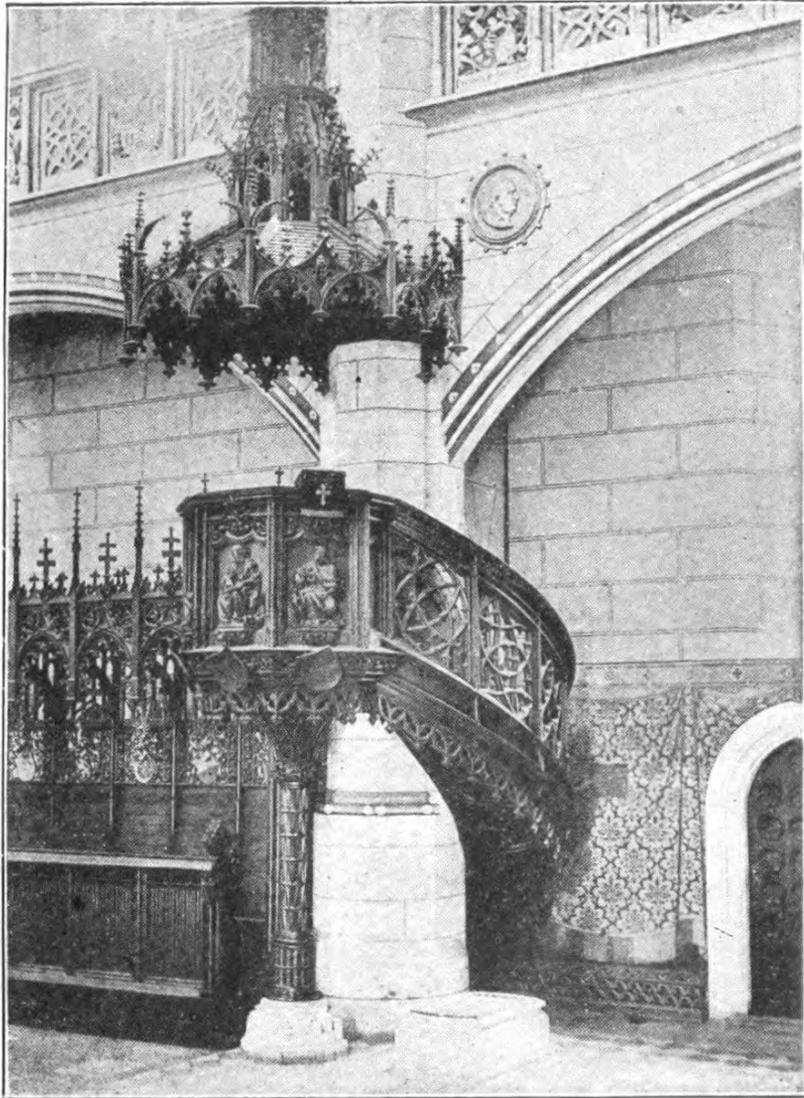
Staupitz very earnestly admonished Luther to apply himself to preaching, which the latter was not easily persuaded to do, because he considered it a matter of the highest moment to speak to a congregation in God's stead. However, he finally complied and first preached in an old chapel, about 30 feet by 20 in size. This building was constructed of wood, daubed with clay, and propped all around to keep it from falling to the ground. Of this old chapel Myconius said: "In short, it in every way had the appearance which artists give to the stall of Bethlehem in which Christ was born. Now, in this poor and wretched chapel God permitted His holy Gospel and dear child Jesus to be born anew, held forth and exhibited to the world." In a short time this little chapel became too small and Luther was called to preach in the parish church.

About this time he had begun the explanation of the Epistle to the Romans. He came to the well-known quotation from the Prophet Habakkuk: *The just shall live by his faith.* This grand passage made so deep an impression upon his mind that it seemed as if a voice were constantly saying these

words to him. Under these impressive circumstances it came to pass that he, together with another brother of his order, was sent by his superior to Rome to bring about the adjustment of a dispute within the order. Luther undertook this journey very willingly, because he hoped to find peace and comfort for his distressed soul by visiting the churches and other holy places in Rome.

After a tedious journey of six weeks Luther and his companion stood before the gates of the Eternal City. When seeing it afar off, the devout monk and priest, Luther, cast himself prostrate on the ground and exclaimed with fervor: "Hail! thou sacred Rome!" But once within the city, he soon found himself sadly disappointed. Among many other blasphemies and vulgarities which he observed in the "holy" city, he once heard a priest reading mass and speaking these words over the bread and wine: "Bread thou art, and bread thou shalt remain; wine thou art, and wine thou shalt remain." Luther was greatly disgusted at the levity of the priests and at the manner in which they conducted the sacred services of the Church. Yet he hoped to find rest for his soul, and to this end visited the different churches and other holy places and read many masses.

There was at that time on exhibition at the "holy" city the so-called stair-case of Pontius Pilate (*scala sancta*, holy stairway), which was said to have been brought to Rome from the judgment-hall of Pilate in Jerusalem. The pope had promised full indulgence to all who would climb up this stairway in the hope of appeasing the wrath of



THE PULPIT IN THE CASTLE CHURCH AT WITTENBERG.

God and doing penance for their sins. Luther desired to obtain such a full indulgence, and on his knees began, step after step, to ascend the staircase. But whilst he was thus devoutly engaged in this supposed meritorious work, a voice of thunder appeared to ring in his ears, saying: *The just shall live by faith.*

Whilst at Rome Luther had occasion to see the pomp and grandeur of Pope Julius II., who was proud and avaricious in the highest degree. He would ride in triumph as an earthly monarch, in a magnificent carriage of state, drawn by fine horses, and the consecrated wafer or host was carried around with him, on a milk white steed. The pope had already commenced the erection of St. Peter's Church, and little did the humble Augustinian monk suppose that this the grandest cathedral of Christendom, should lead to the incidental provocation for his protestations against the shameful traffic in indulgences and thus be an occasion for the future Reformation of the Church.

Luther remained at Rome about a month, and did not desire to remain any longer than was necessary for the transaction of the business of his monastic order. He afterward said: "Whoever goes to Rome for the first time is looking for a rogue; whoever goes a second time will find him; and whoever goes the third time will return with him." Luther's journey to the "holy" city gave him a glimpse into the horrible abominations of the papacy which was necessary for preparing him to do the work of the Reformation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Luther Becomes Doctor of Theology.

In the year 1512 Staupitz, the Superior, and the whole convent of the Augustinians at Wittenberg resolved that brother Martin should be made a Doctor of Theology. The humble monk protested against this design, but all his protestations were unavailing. Accordingly on the 18th of October of that year he was declared a licentiate of sacred theology by Dr. Karstadt, and on the following day he was adorned with a badge of a Doctor of Theology. He would often say in later times: "I was called and compelled to take the doctorate, without thanks and out of pure obedience. I was obliged to assume the honor, and to vow and promise to teach the most precious Holy Scriptures sincerely and honestly." He directed his whole attention to the study of the Word of God, which had been shamefully neglected by the teachers of scholastic theology. He delivered lectures first on the Epistle to the Romans and afterward on the Psalms. His explanations shed a flood of light upon the meaning of these inspired books. He pointed out the difference between the Law and the Gospel. He refuted the fatal error prevailing in schools and churches, that men can merit the forgiveness of sin through their own good works and become righteous in the sight of God by their obedience. In all his teaching he appealed to the Holy Scriptures as the sole and infallible authority. During all this time that grand, fundamental doc-

trine which in future years he declared to be "the first article of a standing or falling Church"—the doctrine of justification by faith alone—began to assume a definite shape and form in his mind and heart.

Among the many precious truths to which he gave utterance at this time are the words he wrote to a distressed friend and brother of his order: "My dear brother, learn to know Christ and Him crucified; learn to praise Him, and despairing of thyself to say: *Thou, my Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, but I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken upon Thyself what was mine, and given me what was Thine. Thou hast become what Thou wert not, and made me what I was not.*"

The more Luther studied the Bible, the more he turned away from the shallow theology then in vogue. But he did not anticipate that his teachings would ever lead to a controversy between him and Rome. He yet held to the Romish doctrine of the supremacy of the pope and the infallibility of the Church. He desired the removal of the dry, stale, and unprofitable theology of the schools, patterned after the model of the heathen philosopher Aristotle, and earnestly labored for the restoration of a plain, practical and scriptural theology, which instructs the mind and comforts the heart. His profound German nature could not be satisfied with the shallow and formal theology of his time. His ardent, earnest soul longed and labored to give the Church a theology which is as deep and profound as it is plain and practical. His loving heart yearned for the closest union with God and for

depth and inwardness of religious conviction. But he expected to obtain all he desired without a controversy with the Church or its acknowledged head, the pope. He labored to remove existing abuses and to restore the authority of the Holy Scriptures. Yet in all this he considered himself a true and faithful son of the Church of Rome.

In the year 1516, acting under the authority of his Superior, Dr. Staupitz, commenced a visitation of the Augustinian monasteries in Meissen and Thuringia. He traveled from cloister to cloister, established schools and admonished all under his charge to study the Holy Scriptures and to live pious and peaceable lives. After his return to Wittenberg he lectured on the Epistle to the Galatians and translated the Seven Penitential Psalms. In the month of October, 1516, the plague raged very severely in Wittenberg and Luther was advised to flee. He replied: "Whither shall I flee? I trust the world will not crumble to pieces if brother Martin fall. If the pestilence rages more violently I shall indeed send the brethren away in various directions, but I have been placed here and duty forbids me to flee."

Whilst Luther was thus actively engaged in teaching and preaching, the notorious Dominican monk, John Tetzel, appeared with the celebrated papal indulgences. His scandalous proceedings forced Luther into the arena. The turning point in his life had come. The conflict began with the posting of the ninety-five Theses on the subject of indulgences to the door of the Castle church at Wittenberg, and the hammer-strokes of the "soli-

tary monk" rang throughout all Christendom and announced to the world that a new era of the Church had begun.

CHAPTER IX.

Luther Defends the Ninety-five Theses.

It was not the intention of Luther to give his Theses a wider circulation than among his friends nearest about him, who, as he supposed, would feel inclined to discuss them. The thought did not once occur to him, that the publication of these propositions had given the impulse to the most stupendous religious movement of modern times, the Reformation of the Church. In an incredibly short time the Ninety-five Theses were published throughout Europe. Moritz Meurer says (Life of Luther p. 61), "Before two weeks were past they had spread through the whole of Germany, and in four weeks nearly through the whole of Christendom, as if the angels themselves had been the carriers and conveyed the message to the ears of all." A pious monk, Dr. Fleck, on reading the Theses exclaimed: "This is the man that will accomplish it; he, for whom we have long been waiting, is coming!" An old clergyman in Westphalia said: "My dear brother Martin, if you can storm and hurl away purgatory and the papal indulgence-trade, you are truly a great man." Others, fearing that Luther was carrying things too far and becoming alarmed at the opposition of his enemies, begged him to desist. But to these timid souls he said: "Beloved fathers, if this business has not

been begun in the name of God, it will soon come to an end, but if it has been begun in His name, then let Him direct it." To one of his friends Luther wrote: "Whatever I do, shall be done, not because of men, but because of the advice and command of God. For if the work is of God, who will hinder it? But if it is not of God, who will sustain it? Not my, not their, not our, but Thy will be done, holy Father who art in heaven. Amen."

Luther was now obliged to defend his Theses. His enemies circulated the grossest falsehoods concerning him, denounced him as a heretic, and went so far in their rage as to charge the University at Wittenberg with heresy. Some of his enemies even said, that Luther was instigated by the Elector of Saxony, who, so they affirmed, harbored envy and malice against the Archbishop of Mayence. These accusations against Luther and the Elector were manifest lies. The latter neither employed Luther nor applauded him for what he had done. The prince was very conservative and did not favor innovations in the Church, whilst at the same time he was always willing to be governed by the Word of God.

In the year 1518 a convention of the Augustinian order was called to meet at Heidelberg. Luther's friends warned him not to go, fearing that his enemies might seize him either by treachery or by main force and kill him. The miserable indulgence-preachers thundered their anathemas at him, threatening that not more than a few weeks should elapse until he should be burned alive. However he proceeded to Heidelberg, where he was received

in a splendid manner by the Count Palatine Wolfgang. Whilst in the city Luther held a public disputation on free-will after the fall, grace, faith, justification and good works. The discussion attracted great attention and although the Professors of the University opposed Luther, yet they did this with modesty and fairness. But a number of notable persons, among them Bucer, Brentius, Schnepf and Billicanus, were won over to the side of truth by the arguments of Luther. The convention having transacted its business, Luther returned to Wittenberg, May 13, 1518.

On the 22d of May of the same year, Luther sent to the Bishop of Brandenburg a detailed exposition of his Theses, and about a week later a similar paper to Pope Leo X. through Staupitz. With reference to his Theses Luther said, that some of them he would prove, and the others he was ready to discuss. He continued to defend the scriptural doctrines of repentance and faith. He emphatically denied that the saints possessed superfluous merits which might be sold by letters of indulgence to lazy Christians. Yet he still held to the Romish figment of a purgatory. He yet entertained a very good opinion of Leo X., but declared Rome to be a very veritable Babylon. He believed that it was necessary to yield to the pope for the sake of order and even to respect his erroneous judgments, yet without approving them. But in another passage he declared, that he did not care whether the pope was pleased or displeased, and that he would only hear and obey him when he spake in agreement with the laws of the Church. He did not wish to oppose the pope. He greatly

lamented the sad condition of the Church and affirmed the necessity of a Reformation which would be the work of God and not of man.

Opinions were very much divided concerning Luther's course. Some hailed him as the harbinger of a new era of the Church, others feared that he was going too far, and a third class denounced him as a vile heretic. But how did the pope look upon the matter? Once he said: "Brother Martin is a very ingenious fellow; but the conflict itself is merely a quarrel between jealous monks." At another time he said: "A drunken German must have written these theses; as soon as he is sober again he will change his mind." The higher ranks of the hierarchy were disposed to consider the issue as an insignificant matter, scarcely worth noticing, and spoke contemptuously of the "obscure" German monk.

But as the excitement caused by the publication of the Ninety-five Theses did not abate, but rather increased, the pope purposed to put an end to the controversy begun by the "unruly" monk. Luther was cited to appear in Rome on the 7th of August, 1518, before a court of inquisition. A correspondence with reference to this citation ensued between the Emperor of Germany, the Elector of Saxony and the papal legate, Cardinal Cajetan. The result of this correspondence was an agreement by the parties concerned, that Luther should appear before the papal legate and other Romish ambassadors in the city of Augsburg, where the whole matter should be fully investigated with a view to its settlement.

CHAPTER X.

Luther Before the Papal Legate and His Meeting with Miltitz.

In September, 1518, Luther set out on his journey to Augsburg, to appear before the papal legate, Cardinal Cajetan. Timid and faint-hearted friends, fearing for his safety, warned him not to go. Luther replied: "In Augsburg, even in the midst of mine enemies, Jesus Christ also reigns. May Christ live even if Martin should die." He arrived at Augsburg, October 17th, and was hospitably entertained, first in the Augustinian and afterward in the Carmelite cloister. A friend of the papal legate, an Italian, called upon Luther and said to him that the whole matter turned about six letters: *revoca* (i. e. recant). But Luther thought these six letters were very important. When the Italian asked Luther whether he supposed that the Elector would go to war on his account, Luther replied: "That I would not desire." The Italian then asked him: "But where will you, forsaken of all, remain then?" and the fearless monk gave the answer: "Under the heavens." "But what would you do, were the pope and cardinals in your power?" asked the friend of the cardinal, and Luther answered: "I would show them all honor and reverence."

Having received an imperial safe-conduct, Luther went to the papal legate. He very reverently prostrated himself before him and remained so until he was commanded to arise. Then after all

present had remained silent for a while, Luther addressed the legate, saying, that he had appeared in obedience to the papal summons and the demand of the elector, to confess that he had written the Ninety-five Theses. He declared himself ready and willing to hear the accusations brought against him, and demanded that if he had erred, he should be informed and corrected. The legate in a very fatherly manner demanded of Luther in the name of the pope that he revoke his errors and promise to abstain from promulgating opinions that might disturb the peace of the Church. It was asked of Luther that he recant two articles he had taught, first, the denial that the merit of Christ is really the "indulgence-treasury" sold by the Church, and secondly, that a person desiring to receive the holy Supper must possess faith and believe that his sins are forgiven him. Whilst Luther appealed to the Bible as authority for his teachings, the cardinal based his declarations on the authority of the pope, which authority, he said, was above the Bible, the Church and the general Councils. He said to Luther: "You must recant to-day, whether you will or not; otherwise I will condemn all your Theses for the reason assigned above." But Luther could not and would not recant.

Luther now drew up a written declaration in which he offered publicly to defend his Theses and to submit them to the judgment of the Universities at Basel, Freiburg, Louvain, and Paris. The haughty cardinal mocked at this proposal and told Luther to give up such vain thoughts and to recant. He would not agree to a disputation on the

subjects involved, but permitted Luther to prepare a longer explanation of the principal questions at issue. On the following day Luther sent his written declaration to the legate. In this writing he declared very positively that the papal decrees may err and conflict with the Word of God, that every believer should judge the pope's decisions by the Holy Scriptures, and in conclusion he asked the legate to point out to him a better way, but not force him to act contrary to his conscience, because we must obey God rather than men. The cardinal legate, however, would not even examine Luther's writing, but urged him again to recant. He threatened with excommunication and interdict and dismissed Luther with these words: "Go, and do not show your face again to me unless it be to recant."

Thus was Luther sent away from the august presence of a high dignitary of the Church. The legate was not able to cope with the learned monk in debate and was no doubt well aware of this. He is said to have remarked after his last interview with Luther: "I will not confer with this beast again, for it has deep eyes and wonderful speculations in its head." Luther tarried at Augsburg a few days, awaiting the legate's pleasure. But as the latter remained silent Luther left the city October 20th, 1518, after having addressed a friendly note to Cajetan, in which he asked forgiveness for the warmth he had shown in his conversations with him. Then Luther drew up another declaration in which he appealed from "the badly informed pope to the better to be instructed pope," sending this

writing to the legate. He also posted up a copy of this document on the door of the cathedral.

On the 31st of October, 1518, he arrived at Wittenberg. The day being the anniversary of the nailing of the Ninety-five Theses to the church-door at Wittenberg, he was received with great rejoicing by the citizens and students. To his friend Spalatin he wrote: "By God's grace I have arrived safe and sound, but uncertain how long I shall remain. For my cause is so situated that I both hope and fear. I am filled with joy and peace, so that I am surprised that the trials which have befallen me should appear to many to be something great."

But the enemies of the truth did not rest. Cardinal Cajetan preferred charges against Luther for his "obstinacy," and demanded that the elector, Frederick of Saxony, should either deliver him up to the papal authorities or expel him from his dominions. Luther was willing to leave Wittenberg and to go whither God would lead him. But the Elector Frederick did not comply with the legate's cruel request. Meanwhile Luther was not idle. He published a report of his discussions with Cajetan and defended his course. He was not concerned about his safety. To a friend he wrote: "Far greater things now engage my pen. I do not know whence these thoughts come to me. In my estimation this business has not even begun, notwithstanding that their highnesses at Rome think it already at an end. I shall send you my trifles, that you may see whether I justly entertain the opinion that the very Antichrist of whom Paul

speaks rules at the Roman court; that the latter is at present worse than the Turk, I believe I am able to show." Shortly after this Luther formally and solemnly appealed to a general Council of the Christian Church, and daily expected to hear of his excommunication by the pope.

In October, 1518, Charles von Miltitz, the papal chamberlain, was sent by the pope as nuncio or ambassador to the Elector Frederick to convey to him the consecrated golden rose, as a mark of the papal favor. Miltitz was empowered to confer with the elector concerning the prosecution of the war with the Turkish sultan and also with regard to Martin Luther, "this child of Satan and son of perdition," to consider his cause and to proceed against him and all his adherents. Luther met Miltitz at Altenburg in January, 1519. The papal nuncio demanded a formal retraction from Luther, and the latter asked to be shown his errors. Finally they agreed on two articles: First, both parties should cease to write and speak upon the questions at issue. Secondly, Miltitz should write to the pope requesting him to appoint a learned bishop as arbitrator between the two parties. Luther promised to retract if it were shown that he had taught errors in doctrine.

It now appeared as if the negotiations had taken a favorable turn. Luther even addressed a letter to the pope in which he declared that it never was his intention to oppose the Church, and in which he also refuted the slanders of his enemies. He was willing to let the matter of indulgences rest, provided his enemies would also keep quiet.

Miltitz appeared to be content with these declarations of Luther, although he did not know how the papal court would regard them.

In the meanwhile the Emperor of Germany, Maximilian I. had died (January 17, 1519), and the Elector Frederick of Saxony, became the temporary regent of the Emperor until an Emperor could be chosen. At his earnest suggestion, the electors chose King Charles I., of Spain, afterward known in history as Charles V., Emperor of Germany, as the successor of Maximilian. The new emperor was no friend of Germany and German institutions. He had no sympathy for the German people, as his subsequent course abundantly showed. After many negotiations between Miltitz and the Elector of Saxony, the former demanded that Luther should go to Coblenz and have a hearing before the Archbishop Richard of Treves. But inasmuch as Miltitz had received no such instructions from the pope and the Archbishop had no orders from Rome to cite Luther to appear before him, Luther very properly refused to comply with the demand of Miltitz.

CHAPTER XI.

The Discussion at Leipzig and Other Matters.

Already in the year 1516 a controversy had arisen between Dr. John Eck, Prochancellor of the University of Ingolstadt, and Dr. Andrew Karlstadt, Professor of Theology at Wittenberg, with reference to the doctrine of free-will. Dr. Eck, in

his writings, fiercely assailed Luther, denouncing him as a heretic, rebel, and madman. At first Luther was unwilling to answer Dr. Eck's slanders, but after having been repeatedly requested by his friends to defend himself, he fully answered and refuted the base falsehoods of his opponent. Karlstadt also defended Luther, and in answer to Eck's haughty challenge agreed to meet him in public debate. Whilst Luther was at Augsburg he arranged with Dr. Eck to have this discussion take place, either at Leipzig or Erfurt. Finally the former place was chosen. Eck now published certain theses, which he would defend against Karlstadt. But in these theses Eck almost entirely passed over in silence his controversy with Karlstadt and directed his attacks chiefly against Luther, especially with regard to the question of the pope's supremacy. Thus Luther was again obliged to enter the arena and defend himself. To his friends, who endeavored to dissuade him from this step, the fearless Reformer said: "Even though I should perish, the world will not go to destruction on that account. By the grace of God the Wittenbergers have so far progressed that they do not need me."

On the 27th of June, 1519, the disputation was inaugurated with very solemn and impressive religious services in the Pleissenburg, the largest hall in the palace of Duke George of Saxony. The Professors of the University at Wittenberg, Karlstadt, Luther, and Melancthon were attended by two hundred students armed with spears and halberds. A large number of theologians, as well as many laymen of all classes, were present at the

discussions. Eck and Karlstadt disputed four days on the doctrines of free-will, grace, and other topics. The former had more dialectic ability and a better memory than the latter. Eck possessed great vivacity in speaking, was very vehement, and could mystify his hearers with a perfect torrent of high-sounding words. His audacity was boundless, and when caught in a net, he could extricate himself in a very ingenious manner. Karlstadt had a hollow and disagreeable voice, inferior memory, and was easily excited to anger.

On the 4th of July began the discussion between Luther and Eck on the supremacy of the pope. Mosellanus, Professor of Eloquence at Leipzig at the time, says that Luther was "of a spare frame; that if you behold him near, you can almost count the bones of his body. He is in the prime of manhood, and has a clear and penetrating voice. His learning and knowledge of the Scriptures are so admirable that he is at home in almost everything." Neither did Luther lack in material for discussing any question, being well provided with words and facts.

Luther would willingly have passed by the subject of the pope's supremacy, but Dr. Eck's proposition compelled him to discuss it. To Eck's declaration, that it was necessary for the Church to have a head, Luther replied, that Christ Himself is the Head of the Church according to the Scriptures. He said: "If the pope were the head of the Church, then the Church, would, at the death of a pope, be without a head until another was elected." On the 8th of July the question,

whether the pope derives his supremacy from divine or from human right, was discussed. At that time Luther yet admitted the papal supremacy according to human right. When, in the course of the debate, Luther declared that the pope did not derive his authority from the law of God, but from the law of man, Duke George of Saxony vehemently exclaimed "The pope *is* the pope, whether by human or divine right." Eck attempted to throw upon Luther the suspicion that he was an adherent of Huss. But Luther, although not approving of the arbitrary separation of the Hussites in Bohemia from the pale of the Church, declared "that several doctrines of Huss were undoubtedly Christian and evangelical."

Further disputations were held between Luther and Eck on the doctrines of repentance, absolution, and satisfaction for sin. The discussions were closed July 15th and the Wittenbergers returned home. Of course, the papal party claimed the victory. The sophistries of Eck had deceived many persons, but eminent and learned men were not dazzled by the glittering falsehoods of the boastful champion of popery. Luther said that Eck and his friends did not seek the truth but fame, and that it was not to be wondered at that the debate had a bad beginning and a worse ending.

Yet this disputation was useful in disseminating many evangelical truths and furthering the cause of the Reformation. A spirit of inquiry and of discussion on the wants and necessities of the Church was awakened, and the work of purifying Christendom and restoring the supreme authority

of the Scriptures constantly progressed. Having returned to Wittenberg Luther again devoted himself to his labors of teaching and writing. The pope had up to his time not yet passed the formal sentence of condemnation upon Luther, although he had already called him a heretic. But now the enemies of the Reformer earnestly labored to bring upon him the papal ban or excommunication. He was attacked by the Franciscan order and denounced as a dangerous heretic. Then he was bitterly assailed by Dr. Jerome Emser, Professor of Canton Law, at Leipzig. The faculties of the Universities of Cologne and Louvain condemned his book to be burned. The Bishop of Meissen said that his books should be cast into the flames and that he should be forced to retract his teachings. He was generally denounced as a follower of the "heretic," John Huss. But the Reformer cared nothing for these denunciations.

He well knew that no peace was now to be expected. The conflict was fully on, and the war must be fought out to the end. To his friend Spalatin, chaplain to the Elector Frederick, he wrote: "Do not imagine that Christ's cause upon earth can be furthered in sweet peace. The word of holiness can never be proclaimed without unrest and danger; it is a word of eternal majesty and accomplishes great things and wonderful among the high and the great. It kills, as says the prophet (Ezekiel 34, 16). In this matter peace must be given up or else the Word of God denied. The war is the Lord's, who came not to bring peace into the world, but a sword (Matt. 10, 34). If

thou dost rightly estimate the Gospel, then do not believe that its cause can be conducted without tumult, offence and disturbance."

Powerful enemies appeared on all sides to put down the "obscure" and "rebellious" monk. Whole monastic orders condemned him as a vile heretic. Dr. Eck went to Rome to bring about his condemnation by the pope. It is said that the Bishop of Brandenburg once remarked that "he would not put his head to rest until he had thrown Martin Luther into the fire." Duke George brought charges against him as a Hussite and accused him before the Elector of Saxony.

Meanwhile Luther's writings were scattered broadcast over the German empire and gained for him many warm friends. The German knights, Ulrich von Hutten, Franciscus von Sickingen and Sylvester von Schauenburg offered protection to him and many other German noblemen sympathized with him. But Luther was full of courage, although he knew full well, that he would have to meet the fiery wrath of the pope and his adherents. He wrote about this time: "My adversaries shall know that what I have as yet not done against them is owing neither to my forbearance nor to their tyranny or merits, but to the person and authority of the prince (Frederick, Elector of Saxony), and to the common cause of the University at Wittenberg. As for myself the die is cast. Rome's favor and rage are alike despised. I will never be reconciled to them—they may condemn my books and commit them to the flames."

At this time Luther was engaged in writing the grand public manifesto of the Reformation, entitled: "To the Christian Nobles of the German Nation, concerning the Reformation of the Christian Church." In the dedication of this writing to Amsdorf, licentiate and prebendary at Wittenberg, it is said: "The time to keep silence is passed and the time to speak is come." Luther appealed to the nobility since the clergy had become indifferent to the wants of the Church. The Romanists, he said, had built around themselves a triple wall, so that no one was able to approach them in order to effect a Reformation. The first wall was the alleged superiority of the so-called spiritual power over the secular power. The second was the Romish dogma, that only the pope could interpret the Scriptures, and the third, the claim, that the pope alone could call and preside over a general Church Council. Luther proposed to tear down this triple wall. He declared that the difference between the spiritual and secular orders, as taught by Rome, was fictitious; that all true Christians belong to the spiritual order, and that there is no difference between them other than that of the respective offices or stations in life of the different members, who should serve one another in love. The secular power has the right to rule without hindrance in its own appropriate sphere, and no pope or bishop has the right to interfere. Even so the spiritual power has the right to rule in its sphere without any hindrance from the secular power. As to the pope being the only interpreter of the Scriptures, the idea is absurd, since it is

manifest that the popes, although pretending to be interpreters of the Bible, often showed their ignorance of what it taught. Besides this, all believers are taught of God by means of His Word and are to judge all doctrines taught them by the standard of the Word. As for the pope alone having the power to call a general Church Council and his presiding over it, all believers know, that where the pope acts or decides contrary to the Scriptures, we are in duty bound to stand by the Scriptures and to reprove the pope. And if the latter is accused of sin or error, he is to be tried by a free Christian Council, subject only to the Word of God.

Luther then points out in detail, what should be done to bring about a Reformation of the Church and the general amelioration of the condition of the State. He severely denounces the pride, the arrogance, and the usurpation of the papacy and closes with the words: "God give us all a Christian understanding and especially to the Christian nobles of the German nation true spiritual courage to do the best for our poor Church. Amen."

This "war-trumpet of the Reformation" was heard in every nook and corner of the German Empire. In the course of a few weeks four thousand copies of this noble address were circulated and a new edition was published. In addition to this soul-stirring document, the Reformer also wrote many publications for the instruction of the people in Christian doctrine and life. Luther was constantly engaged in laboring for the welfare of the Church and of society. He said of himself:

"I have surely a rapid hand and a quick memory, so that what I write flows freely of its own accord, and not as if I had to produce it; and yet I am not able to get over the ground."

CHAPTER XII.

Luther Burns the Papal Bull.

Charles von Miltitz, the papal ambassador, made another attempt to bring about an amicable adjustment of the difficulties between Luther and the Romish authorities, and prevailed upon Stau-pitz to request Luther to write a private letter to the pope, assuring the pontiff that it had never entered his mind to do anything against his person. At this time Dr. Eck had already arrived at Leipzig with the papal bull or edict of excommunication against Luther, and was uttering horrible threats against the "stubborn" monk. Miltitz said to Eck that he had acted too hastily in the matter, and that he should not have published the bull whilst there was yet hope of an amicable adjustment. Miltitz requested Luther to meet him at Lichtenberg, informing him that the bull would not go into effect until 120 days after it was first issued, and that in case of a peaceful adjustment, the pope would modify or nullify the sentence. Luther accordingly met Miltitz at Lichtenberg, where the agreement was made that Luther should dedicate to the pope some treatise, accompanied by a letter in which a short statement of the troubles should be given, at the same time assuring the pontiff that no harm was designed against him personally.

According to this agreement Luther dedicated to the pope his treatise entitled: "Of the freedom of a Christian." In his private letter Luther said, that although he had appealed from the papal court to a free, Christian Council, he nevertheless respected the person of the pope and had spoken of him in respectful terms. He had called him a Daniel in Babylon, whilst he severely denounced the Romish Court, which, he declared more abominable than Sodom, Gomorrah and Babylon. He pitied the pope, who, as he supposed, was innocent of the abominations of Rome and could not restrain the corruption prevailing there. He entreated him not to listen to his base flatterers, but to check them in their mad career, and implored him to allow that God's Word and the true doctrine might be preached without hindrance. In conclusion, Luther referred to his treatise mentioned above and said: "It is but a small insignificant book, if the paper only is considered; yet the whole sum of what a Christian life should be is contained in it, if the sense is regarded. I am poor and have nothing else with which to serve thee, neither hast thou any need of aid, but in spiritual matters. And herewith I commend myself to thy holiness, which may Jesus Christ ever bless. Amen."

Thus whilst the papal bull of excommunication was already in the hands of one of Luther's bitterest enemies, and although he well knew this, he appealed to the pope to consider the wants and necessities of the Church, believing that at heart the pontiff was solicitous of its welfare and desirous to better its condition. Luther yet made a

clear distinction between the corrupt court of Rome and the pope. But he soon made the discovery that his opinion of Leo X. was far too favorable.

A few days before Luther wrote to the pope, his powerful treatise, "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," in which he treats at length of the meaning of the sacraments, especially of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, made its appearance. He opposed the refusal of the cup to the laity and the Romish errors of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass. He also showed that the so-called sacrament of penance had been shamefully perverted by the clergy, and that confirmation, matrimony, ordination, and extreme unction cannot properly be termed sacraments. He concluded the treatise with these words: "I hear that the papal anathemas are ready to be hurled against me to compel me to recant. If this be so, then I wish that this book be considered a part of my future recantation, in order that they may not in vain lament their vaunting tyranny. And in a little while I will issue a recantation by the help of Christ, the like of which the Roman court has hitherto neither seen nor heard, and therewith I shall prove my obedience, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

After the publication of this vigorous treatise, reconciliation with the pope was no longer to be expected. Before this time Dr. Eck had arrived in Germany with the bull of excommunication. On the 21st of September, 1520, it was publicly made known at Meissen, and a few days later also at Merseburg and Brandenburg. Burkhard, rector of

the University at Wittenberg, refused to publish it, when sent to him by Dr. Eck, because it had not been delivered in proper form. The bull or edict begins with the words: "Arise, O Lord, and Judge Thy cause! Remember the reproach which the foolish cast again Thee all the day long! St. Peter, St. Paul, the congregation of saints, arise! The foxes would lay waste the vineyard of the Lord; a wild boar has entered therein; a savage beast would pasture there." The pope then declares 41 theses taught by Luther as heretical, and he is called upon to recant within sixty days. If he and his adherents stubbornly refused to do this they should be treated as heretics, Luther's writings should be burned and he accursed. All intercourse with him and his adherents was strictly forbidden. All persons, clerical and secular, were commanded, under severe penalties, to seize the person of Martin Luther and his adherents and to give them up to the pope for which "good work" a proper reward would be given. At any rate, Luther and all that adhered to him were to be expelled wherever they might be found. Under pain of excommunication Luther and his adherents were to be publicly declared to be condemned heretics.

This papal bull or edict was dated June 4, 1520. It was not until the early part of October that Luther first obtained a copy of it. He considered it as genuine, but at first did not desire to mix up the name of the pope in the matter, and hence treated it as an invention of Dr. Eck. About this time Luther received a very gracious letter from the Elector of Saxony. But his trust was in

God. He remembered the biblical saying: "Put not your trust in princes." "They are but men," said Luther, "and cannot help you. If the Gospel were of such a nature that it could be diffused and supported by the great men of this world, then God would not have entrusted it to fishermen." And as the Reformer's teachings had been shamefully misrepresented in the papal bull, he published another treatise, entitled: "Against the Bull of the Antichrist," in which he bravely defended his Theses and clearly exposed the fallacies of the papal edict.

Meanwhile Luther's writings were publicly burned by his enemies in Cologne, Louvain and Mayence. All hope of a peaceful adjustment of the controversy had now vanished. It was impossible for Luther to retreat; he could not and would not recant. In order to show his enemies that the die was cast and that by the grace of God he was determined to fight this war to the end, he resolved to do a bold act. On December 10th a notice posted in the lecture-room of the university, announced that the papal decrees should be publicly burned the next day at nine o'clock in the forenoon. The students, magisters and doctors of the university were invited to attend. At the appointed hour a numerous company assembled before the Elstergate, where an honorable magister piled up some fagots and set them afire. When the blaze ascended up in the chill December air, Luther threw several papal decrees, writings of Eck and Emser and the bull of Pope Leo X., issued against him, into the flames. As he cast the papal bull into the fire he

said: "Because thou hast grieved the holy one of the Lord, may eternal fire grieve and consume thee." After this act Luther with many of his friends returned to the city. But some of the students remained at the fire and from time to time fed the flames with papal edicts, whilst others paraded the streets of Wittenberg deriding Dr. Eck and the papal bull of excommunication.

The next day the Reformer, after having lectured on the Psalms, admonished all his hearers to beware of the unchristian laws and statutes of the pope. He said that the burning of the papal decrees had been mere child's play and that it was infinitely more important and necessary to burn the pope, that is, the false doctrines and vile abominations of popery. He said: "If you do not with all your heart oppose the wicked government of the pope, you cannot be saved. For the kingdom of the pope is so utterly opposed to the kingdom of Christ and to Christian life, that it would be better and safer to live in a wilderness without any human being near, than in and under the kingdom of Antichrist."

The burning of the papal bull by Luther made a deep impression on the German nation, which soon divided into two hostile camps. The conflict was carried from city to city, from town to town, from house to house. Ulrich von Hutten and other German knights were ready to defend the cause of the Reformation with sword in hand, but Luther restrained these fiery spirits, saying: "We must not contend for the Gospel with brute force. Through

the Word the world has been overcome! through the Word the Church has been preserved; through the Word the Church will be purified and restored."

The time set by the pope for Luther's recantation had expired. The Reformer remained firm and the Supreme Pontiff on the third of January, 1521, issued a final edict of excommunication against the "stubborn" monk and all his adherents. But the authority of the pope had been so weakened by the power of the Divine truth, that this second horrible anathema was received in Germany with laughter and derision. The Reformation had begun.

PART III.

THE STRUGGLES AND CONFLICTS OF THE REFORMATION.

**FROM LUTHER'S APPEARANCE BEFORE THE IMPERIAL DIET
AT WORMS TO THE DIET OF AUGSBURG.— A. D. 1521-1530.**

CHAPTER I.

The Reformer Before the Diet at Worms.

An important period for the Reformation had now come. The great work had been fully inaugurated, but many severe struggles and sharp conflicts were yet to be encountered before it could be accomplished. Luther did not falter. God had led him, step by step, from the time when he first set up the Ninety-five Theses to the day when he publicly cast into the flames the papal bull of excommunication. And God did not forsake His chosen instrument, but stood by him in all his conflicts with Antichrist and gave him a glorious victory in the end.

In the history of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century Martin Luther stands forth in bold relief as the central and commanding figure in a group of great men. His greatness was unique. Charles P. Krauth, D. D., author of *The Conservative Reformation*, says: "Luther had that excep-

tional greatness which convinces the world that he alone could have done the work. He was not a mere mountain-top, catching a little earlier the beams, which by their own course, would soon have found the valleys; but rather, by the divine ordination under which he rose like the sun itself, without which the light on mountain and valley would have been but a starlight or moonlight. He was not a secondary orb, reflecting the light of another orb, as was Melanchthon and even Calvin; still less the moon of a planet, as Bucer or Brentius; but the center of undulations which filled a system with glory."

The noble Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, made known to the emperor his desire to have no proceedings instituted against Luther until an opportunity had first been given him to speak for himself. Charles V., who earnestly wished to see the controversy finally closed, enjoined the elector to bring Luther with him to the Diet or national assembly of the princes and other estates of the German Empire, to be held in the city of Worms, "there to have his affair investigated by learned and highly intelligent men, and to see to it that he would sustain no injury or any ill-treatment." The elector replied that he had never defended Luther; but as the latter had so often expressed his willingness to submit to a proper investigation of his teachings, the elector laid the matter before the emperor. But since Luther's opponents had not remained silent in the meantime and had burned his books in several cities, without first making an attempt to refute them, and because

Luther might, perhaps, before the elector's writing should reach the emperor, again answer the attacks of his enemies: the emperor was asked to excuse the elector from bringing Luther with him to the Diet. But when the emperor learned that Luther had been formally excommunicated, he ordered the elector to bring Luther with him, after the latter had first recanted all he had written against the pope and had promised unconditional submission to His Holiness. And even then Luther should not be brought to Worms, but to Frankfort-on-the-Main or some other city, to await further proceedings. If, however, Luther would refuse to comply with this demand, the elector should permit him to remain at Wittenberg until the emperor and the elector had consulted together on the matter.

Luther was asked by Spalatin what he would do, if he were cited to appear before the emperor, and boldly replied: "If I am cited, I shall, as far as it depends upon me, have myself conveyed thither sick, if I cannot proceed in health, for I dare not doubt that the Lord calls me when the emperor calls." Again he said: "Expect everything from me, except flight or recantation: flee of myself I shall not, recant much less. In this may the Lord Jesus sustain me. For neither the one nor the other could I do without detriment to godliness and the salvation of many."

When Luther heard that the emperor had given up his intention of citing him to Worms to appear before the Imperial Diet, he regretted it very much, for he greatly desired to state the matter to learned, pious, and impartial judges, and to de-

fend himself, so that all might perceive that he wished to promote the glory of God, the welfare of the Church, the prosperity of the German nation, and the removal of gross, unchristian and tyrannical abuses, usurpations and blasphemies.

The adherents of the pope were by no means anxious to have Luther cited to appear before the national assembly. Aleander, the papal ambassador, delivered a very violent speech before the Diet, calling attention to Luther's heresies, which, he said, were of such a damnable nature, "that a hundred thousand heretics should be burned on account of them, since Huss and even Wickliffe were defended in Luther's heresies." He declared himself against the appearing of Luther before the Diet, as the matter did not belong to its jurisdiction, laymen not being competent judges in the case. He asked that a public edict be issued to burn Luther's works. The emperor actually commanded that all the writings of Luther be delivered to the governmental authorities.

Meanwhile the Reformer was busily employed in teaching and writing. Whilst he was thus engaged, the imperial herald, Caspar Sturm, came to Wittenberg with a safe conduct from the emperor and the commission to escort Luther to Worms and thence again in safety to his home. As Luther journeyed to Worms some persons said to him, that the cardinals and bishops at the Diet desired to burn him, just as Huss had been burned at Constance. But Luther said: "Though they should kindle a fire which should rise up to heaven between Wittenberg and Worms, yet, as he was cited,

he would appear there, and step into the mouth of Behemoth between his great teeth, confess Christ, and leave the issue to Him." Not far from Worms Spalatin sent a messenger to him to warn him against coming into the city. But Luther sent his friend word in return: "If there were as many devils at Worms as there are tiles on the house-tops, yet would I enter in."

Accompanied by three friends, Petzenstein, a monk, Amsdorf, a licentiate, and Suaven, a nobleman, Luther on the 16th of April, 1521, entered the city of Worms in a common traveling car. Before his carriage rode the imperial herald, bearing the insignia of the eagle upon his breast. Besides Justus Jonas, the licentiate, there followed in the rear many Saxon nobles. When the company entered the city, the court-fool or jester of the Duke of Bavaria, bearing a crucifix in his hand, stepped up before Luther, and whether sent by some one or whether acting for himself, as though moved by some strange prophetic spirit, he in a loud voice sung these words: "Now thou hast come, thou, for whom we have longed and waited in darkness." In the evening many noblemen visited Luther at the inn of the Swan, where he was lodging.

When some of Luther's enemies heard of his arrival, they advised the emperor to disregard his own imperial word and safe-conduct and put the "heretic" out of the way. But the emperor, much nobler than his advisers, said: "What we promise we should perform."

The day after Luther's arrival in Worms, the imperial marshal, Ulrich von Pappenheim, sum-

moned him to appear before the emperor and the estates of the realm, at four o'clock in the afternoon, to hear why he had been cited to Worms. After the departure of the marshal, the great but humble Reformer fervently implored God's almighty protection and aid in what he was about to do.

At the appointed time, with cheerful countenance and great courage, Martin Luther followed the marshal by secret passage ways, in order that he should suffer no injury from the immense multitude of people desiring to see him, to the assembly-room of the Diet. Many persons had climbed the roofs of the houses along the way and great multitudes were kept back from the palace by a guard of soldiers.

As Luther was passing toward the assembly-room, he was accosted by the brave knight and eminent commander, George von Friendsberg, who said to him: "My dear monk, thou art now taking a step the like of which neither I nor many a commander on the hardest fought battle-field has ever taken. If thou art right and sure of thy cause, proceed in God's name and be of good cheer; God will not forsake thee."

After having waited two long hours, the Reformer at length stood before the august assembly of the German Diet. The scene was a grand and magnificent one. The Emperor Charles V., a young but powerful monarch, sat on a throne beneath a rich purple canopy, and beside him his brother Ferdinand. Behind the imperial throne there stood a magnificent array of imperial nobles,

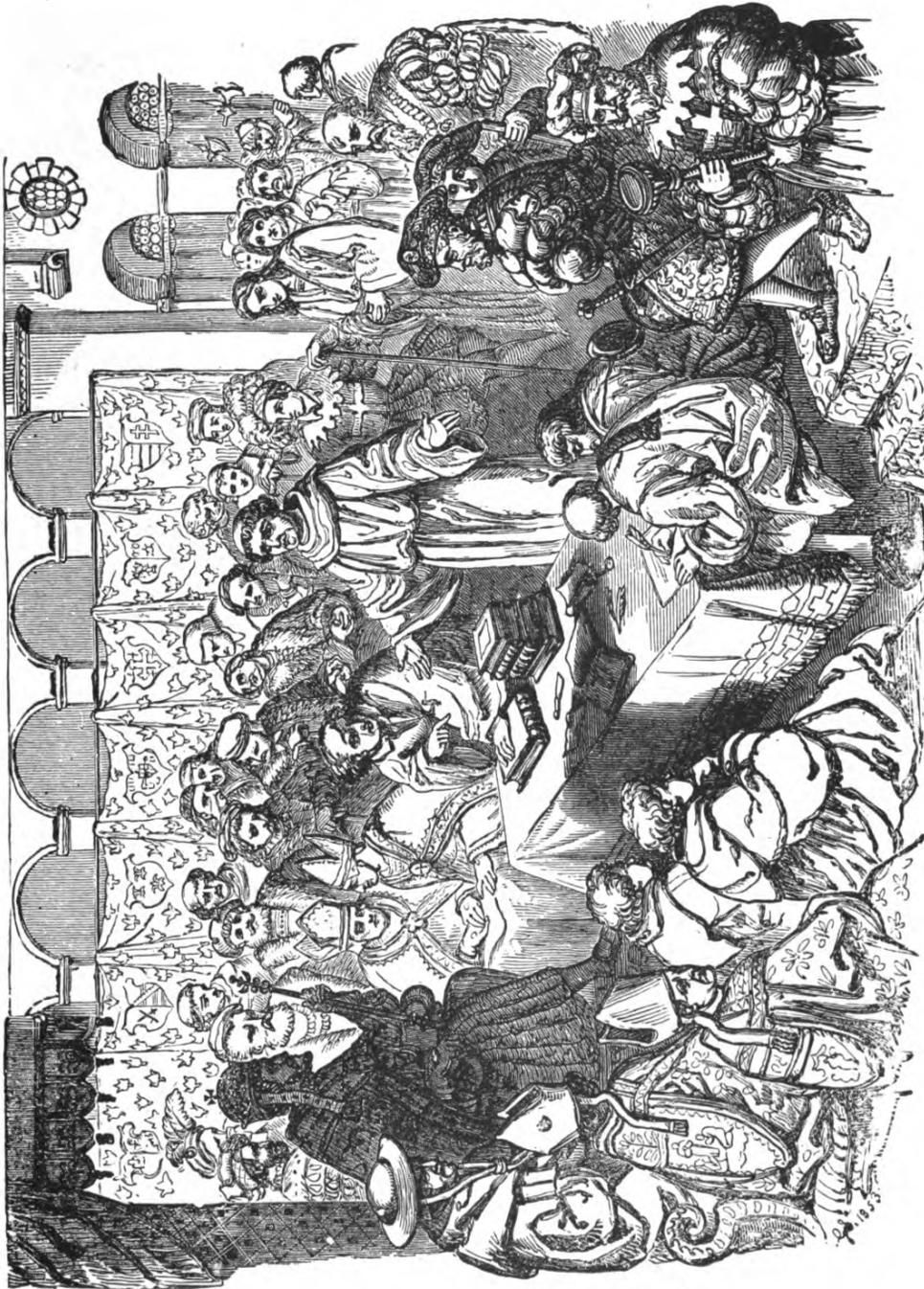
and to the right and left of the throne were seated two hundred princes and nobles of the German nation.

A universal murmur of excitement was heard in that assembly-room when the humble monk, who was destined to shake a slumbering world and rouse it to action, entered at the side of the imperial marshal. After order was restored; the imperial representative, Dr. John Eck (who must not be confounded with the well-known enemy of Luther, mentioned before), addressed the Reformer, informing him that he had been summoned to appear before the Diet to answer two questions. "First, do you acknowledge these books (which lay upon a table before Luther), to be yours or not? And secondly, do you recant, or do you adhere to and maintain the contents of these books?" Dr. Jerome Schurf, a jurist, Luther's counsellor, asked that the titles of the books be read. This having been done, it was found that a large number of these books were not of a controversial character. Luther answered that the books were written by him, but whether to defend or to retract all contained in them, was a question concerning faith, the salvation of the soul and the Word of God, and that in this case he dare not speak rashly or thoughtlessly. He therefore humbly asked time for reflection, so that he might return a proper answer.

After the princes had held a short consultation, the imperial representative, Dr. Eck, said to Luther that although he could have learned from the imperial mandate, why he had been summoned to appear before the Diet, and hence needed no more

time for reflection, yet that the emperor in kindness would allow him one more day to consider the matter, and that Luther should appear at the same hour on the following day and answer, not in writing, but orally.

Accordingly the next day Luther again appeared before the Diet after waiting two hours. The imperial representative demanded of him a final answer to the question, whether he would defend the books, one and all, of which he was the acknowledged author, or whether he would revoke anything contained in said books. Luther replied in a lengthy and well arranged address in Latin and German, with modesty, but yet with great firmness. He said, that any one could see upon examination that not all his books were of the same character. In some he had written about Christian faith and life, doctrine and practice, in so plain and simple a manner, that even his enemies were bound to confess that these books were useful and worthy to be read by all Christian people. Such books he certainly could not revoke without condemning the truths. The second class of his books was directed against the errors of the papacy and the supporters of these errors, who had brought desolation upon the Church by their false teachings and corrupt practices and had tortured and enslaved the consciences of Christians by their human, self-devised doctrines and devoured the possessions of the German nation by their avarice and cupidity. Were he now to retract these writings, he would thereby but strengthen the tyranny of these false teachers and open, as it were, doors and gates to



LUTHER BEFORE EMPEROR CHARLES V. AT THE DIET OF WORMS.

yet greater corruption, since the papists would become bolder and more insolent in pursuing their wicked purposes and would allege, that they were acting with the consent of the emperor. The third class of his writings was directed against individuals who defended papal tyranny and attacked the pure Christian doctrines taught by him. He freely admitted that in these books his language or manner of expression had sometimes been more vehement than was proper. But notwithstanding this defect he could not revoke even these writings because by so doing he would give his assent to the despotism of the papal rule. In defence of his course Luther quoted the words of Christ to the Jewish high-priest (John 18, 23): "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil." He demanded evidence from the Holy Scriptures that his teachings were false, as his opponents alleged, but would not recant unless such evidence was given. And if this evidence was produced he would at once recant and be the first one to throw all his book into the flames.

After a short consultation of the princes, the imperial representative in a rebuking tone of voice said to Luther, that his answer was not satisfactory; that it was not the intention of the Diet to dispute concerning things that had already been determined and condemned by the general Church Councils, and that all that was required of Luther was a plain and unequivocal answer to the question, whether he would or would not recant.

The most important, the sublimest hour of the great Reformation had come. Luther answered the

official's question in words that will continue to ring throughout all time over the whole world—words that sounded the bugle-blast of holy defiance to the power of the Antichrist—words that are written in letters of living light upon the imperishable tablets of history. He said: "Since your Imperial Majesty and your Highnesses desire an unequivocal answer, I will give one that shall have neither horns nor teeth, to this effect: Unless it be proved that I am in error, by testimony from Holy Writ, or by clear and overpowering reasons, (for I base my faith neither upon what the pope nor what the Councils alone have said, since it is evident and manifest, that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am constrained by the passages which I have adduced, my conscience being bound by God's Word, and therefore I cannot and will not recant, because it is neither safe nor advisable to do anything against conscience. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise; God help me! Amen!"

The official of Treves made a very weak attempt to refute Luther. He said that Luther had not spoken to the point. He declared that it was to no purpose to dispute about things condemned by the Council at Constance. Neither was it necessary to give a reason to every person asking one on doctrinal points, or to answer all objections. He said that the emperor desired from Luther a simple direct answer, whether he would defend his doctrine or revoke any of them.

Luther begged the emperor not to permit him to be forced or driven to retract anything against

his conscience. He declared that the answer he had given was to the point, and that he had no other answer to give. When the official said, that it could not be shown that the Councils had ever erred, Luther offered to prove the contrary, but was not given the opportunity. All that Rome desired of Luther was an unconditional surrender.

The Diet adjourned at about eight o'clock in the evening and an escort of two men was given Luther to conduct him to his place of lodging. There was considerable excitement, and many believed that the Reformer would be led to prison. But he cheerfully said to those around him that he was being escorted to his hotel, the Swan. Whilst he was yet standing in the midst of a great throng, Duke Erich of Brunswick sent him a silver tankard of Eimbeck beer with the friendly message, that he should refresh himself. When Luther was told that the gift came from a papal prince, who himself had first drank from the tankard, in order that Luther might not suspect any evil design, the Reformer drank and said: "As Duke Erich has now remembered me, so may our Lord Jesus Christ remember him in his dying hour."

Luther was without fear. To his friend Spalatin he said: "If I had a thousand heads, I would lose them all rather than recant." The Elector of Saxony praised him highly for his courage. At his first appearance before the Diet, the emperor had said: "This monk will never make a heretic of me." But when the monarch heard the brave words: "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise!" he

was touched and said to those near him: "The monk speaks without fear and with great courage."

On the following day the emperor announced to the Diet, that inasmuch as Martin Luther would not renounce his errors, he (the emperor), was compelled, in imitation of the example given by his imperial predecessors, who had always shown themselves to have been faithful and obedient sons of the holy Mother Church, to protect the old faith and to aid the holy Father, the pope, and that he would therefore prosecute Luther with ban and interdict, and by all other lawful means. However he would not violate the written self-conduct given him, but permit him to return home in safety.

Before Luther departed from Worms an attempt was made by several distinguished persons to induce him to recede from his position, but he remained steadfast. The Chancellor from Baden and Dr. Peutingen endeavored to persuade him to simply submit his case to the emperor and the Diet, that they should decide with reference to his books. Luther answered, that he did not object to this proposition, provided his judges only permitted the Holy Scriptures to be the sole guide and umpire in the matter. He emphatically declared, that he would not suffer any man to sit in judgment on the Word of God. When the Reformer was asked to refer his case to a future Church Council, he expressed his willingness to do this, but on the express condition, that the articles drawn from his books should be directly submitted to the Council itself and that the Holy Scriptures should decide everything. The Archbishop of Treves sent for

Luther and very graciously conversed with him, trying to induce him to yield in a few points. When Luther would not do this, he asked him: "My dear Doctor, what is to be done then?" Luther answered: "Most gracious Lord, I know no better advice than that which Gamaliel gave, as stated in the Acts of the Apostles: 'If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it.' So likewise if my cause is not of God, it will not maintain itself for more than two or three years, but if it is of God it cannot be overthrown." Luther then asked the archbishop to secure for him permission from the emperor to return home and within three hours he received an imperial letter of safe-conduct.

On the 26th of April Luther, together with Amsdorf and other companions departed from Worms. The imperial herald, Caspar Sturm, went with the party as far as Friedberg, where Luther dismissed him with a letter to the emperor, in which he returned thanks for the safe-conduct. On the 30th of April Luther and his companions came to Hersfeld, where he was cordially received by the Abbot of the Benedictine cloister. The next day he reached Eisenach, where many persons came out to see him. Here Luther preached. The next morning Dr. Schurf, his counsellor at the Diet, and all his companions except Amsdorf, took leave of him. Luther then visited some relatives near Moehra and preached there under a linden-tree, near the church. From Moehra he had intended to go through the forest to Gotha. At Castle Altenstein his relatives, who had accompanied him

thither, bade him farewell, and the wagon disappeared in the dense forest. Near the ruins of an old chapel a company of armed horsemen, led by two noblemen, suddenly burst forth from a narrow pass in the road. The leader of the armed men commanded the driver to halt and with a show of great violence seized Luther. The driver was then ordered to depart with Amsdorf. One of the horsemen threw a large riding-coat about Luther and assisted him to mount a horse. The party then rode with Luther through the forest. About midnight the riders came in sight of the old Wartburg Castle, near Eisenach. A signal was given and the draw-bridge was lowered. The party rode over and entered within the massive walls of the ancient structure. Martin Luther was securely lodged in his Patmos, as he called the old burg of the Land-graves of Meissen, whilst the world believed that the bold Reformer was no longer among the living.

CHAPTER II.

Progress of the Reformation.

The rumor that Martin Luther had been made a prisoner spread with great rapidity throughout the German empire. Friends and enemies alike were ignorant of his fate. Only a select few were aware that he was securely kept on the Wartburg, where the wrath of his enemies could not reach him. The celebrated painter, Albrecht Duerer, said: "O God, if Luther is dead, who will in the future so clearly preach to us the Holy Gospel? O

my God, what might he not still have written in ten or twenty years! O all ye Christian people, aid me to diligently bewail this heavenly-minded man, and pray to God to send us another enlightened man!" Even the most bitter enemies of the great Reformer could not now rejoice when it was generally believed that he was held a prisoner or had been killed. One of his enemies wrote to the Archbishop of Mayence, "We have gotten rid of Luther, as we desired; but the people are so much excited about it that I fear we shall scarce escape with our lives, if we do not everywhere seek him with lanterns and call him back again."

The imperial edict against Luther was issued May 8th, 1521. This remarkable document was directed not only against him, but also against his writings and doctrines, as well as against his followers and adherents. He was declared to be a notorious, hardened schismatic and heretic. It was forbidden under penalty of punishment for high treason against the imperial government, for any one to harbor, help, support, nourish or entertain, either secretly or openly, by word or deed, this arch-heretic. On the contrary, all persons were ordered to seize him and deliver him over to his Imperial Majesty. "No one shall buy or sell, read or retain his books; but they shall be blotted out of the memory of man." So severe did the imperial edict of Worms proceed against Luther and his adherents, but the Romanists soon discovered that nothing could be gained by such harsh measures.

In the meantime the Reformer was in peaceful security on his Patmos, in the Castle of the Wartburg, where he was known to the inmates as the noble "knight George." By dressing like a nobleman and suffering his hair and beard to grow, his personal appearance was greatly changed. "You would hardly recognize me," he wrote to Spalatin, "For I scarcely recognize myself." Whilst at the Wartburg, he would sometimes take part in the chase, roam through the forest, and even enter several cloisters in the neighborhood, without being recognized. At times he was greatly afflicted with bodily ills and depression of spirits. Yet he was not idle, but applied himself to study and writing.

Sometimes it may have appeared to the great Reformer as if his stay at the Wartburg was equivalent to imprisonment. Nevertheless this period of his life was of the greatest importance to the work of the Reformation. He constantly directed affairs at Wittenberg and at the University by correspondence. In November, 1521, he secretly visited Wittenberg. When the Archbishop of Magdeburg, Cardinal Albrecht, attempted to revive the scandalous sale of papal indulgences, Luther issued a severe writing against this attempt, which had the effect of restraining the Archbishop, so that he ceased to advocate the vile traffic.

Luther's sojourn at the Wartburg was also of great importance in preparing him more thoroughly for the further prosecution of the Reformation. Up to this time this great movement was exclusively attached to the personality of Luther. Although he remained the central and commanding



THE WARTBURG.

figure in the great work, yet as it continued to progress God raised up men of eminent piety and learning to be his worthy co-laborers, who rendered him valuable service. Luther's ideas concerning the Reformation of the Church became riper, maturer, broader, and deeper during his stay on the Wartburg. For a little while he was removed from the public view and led into the solitude of the old Castle, not only that he might rest from the heat and labor of the conflicts in which he had been engaged, but also that he, by drinking deeper at the pure fountain of Divine Truth, the Word of God, might receive new strength and fresh vigor for future labors and conflicts. In this solitude the fiery and zealous Reformer could calmly review his past career and gather clearer and profounder convictions as to what was necessary for the great work. In order fully to accomplish the Reformation it was necessary that the Reformer should become more thorough in evangelical knowledge, so that he could clearly explain the great fundamental truths of the Gospel to the people. He was now to turn his attention more particularly to the elucidation and practical application of the doctrines of the Christian religion. Hence we find him engaged at the Wartburg in reading the Holy Scriptures in the original tongues and preparing his excellent Church Postils.

But his best work whilst at the Wartburg was that of translating the New Testament into the German language, which furthered the work of the Reformation more than anything else. This was the ripest and most precious fruit of Luther's seclu-

sion at the old Castle, the crown of all his labors performed there.

Whilst in his Patmos Luther resolved to translate the whole Bible into the German language. He wrote to a friend: "I will remain here in seclusion until Eastertide. In the meanwhile I will write the Church Postils, and intend to translate the New Testament into the German language. O that every city had its interpreter, and that all tongues, hands, eyes, ears and hearts might concern themselves about this one book! I will translate the Bible, although in so doing I have assumed a task which will exceed my powers." He desired the help of the professors at Wittenberg in this great work.

At the Wartburg Luther also wrote many edifying treatises on different subjects, besides letters to friends, who asked his advice in religious matters. Thus the work of the Reformation continued to progress, notwithstanding the fact that Luther lived in seclusion on the Wartburg.

At this time the learned Philip Melanchthon was Professor of the Greek language at the Wittenberg University. In the departments of philology and pedagogics his merits were so great that he was called "the Preceptor of Germany." His literary talents were of the highest order. He was a faithful, careful and painstaking scholar, who rendered much valuable assistance to the cause of the Reformation. He was peaceful and moderate, mild and cautious and disposed to reconcile contending parties. He did not possess the fire, the energy and the heroism of Martin Luther and

shrunk from public activity. He was not a leader, but a most diligent and earnest assistant of the Reformer in the great work, and was highly esteemed by the latter for his many eminent mental abilities and moral virtues.

Whilst Luther in his solitude and Melancthon in his lecture room were diligently laboring in the same good cause, a storm was beginning to gather, which should soon break out with great fury over many countries in the German Empire to the detriment of the Reformation.

CHAPTER III.

Troubles at Wittenberg and Luther's Return.

Luther in his seclusion rejoiced to hear of the diligence and the success of his co-laborers at the University of Wittenberg. The University was in a very prosperous condition. Many students from all parts of Germany, Switzerland, Poland, and other countries of Europe, flocked to Wittenberg, the centre of the Reformation of the sixteenth century. The Reformer and his friends now earnestly labored to carry out in practice the principles he had defended against the attacks of the Romanists and to bring the Church into harmony with the doctrines of the Gospel.

About this time a violent and destructive spirit of radicalism, which for a while threatened to subvert the whole existing order of things in Church, State, and society in general, and to introduce a universal chaos, began to manifest itself in differ-

ent parts of Germany. A party of rabid, reckless revolutionists, composed of many different classes of persons dissatisfied with the religious, political and social condition of that period, social and religious theorists, visionaries and fanatics, pretending to great spirituality and yet grossly materialistic and sensual in life and practice, now arose under a false plea of Christian and evangelical liberty to usher into the world a new order of things. The intellectual head of this radical movement was Thomas Muenzer, the founder of the sect of Anabaptists in Zwickau in Saxony. In the course of time this sect opposed infant baptism and openly advocated the overthrow of all existing social order, at the same time boasting of new divine revelations. Nicholas Storch and others, known as "the prophets of Zwickau," or "the heavenly prophets," came to Wittenberg and caused great excitement there. The fanatics claimed to have been called directly by the voice of God to preach and to prophesy. The mild and peaceful Melanchthon did not trust himself to pass judgment upon the extraordinary claims of these self-styled prophets, but thought that Luther could best determine their true character.

Carlstadt, at that time Professor of Theology at the University was possessed of a restless and unsettled spirit, and was soon won over to the fanatical party. He was not content with a progressive and conservative reformation of the Church, but favored extreme and violent measures. He was a fiery zealot, who by his radical harangues attracted a multitude of hearers. One day with a

large number of his fanatical followers, he in a demonstrative and violent manner entered the Castle Church at Wittenberg, drove out the priests who were reading mass, and began a furious destruction of altars, pictures, statues, and other churchly ornaments. He desired to make the marriage of priests obligatory, abolish private masses, and called upon monks and nuns to leave their cloisters suddenly and ostentatiously. It was in vain that Melanchthon entreated this wild and unruly spirit to curb his intense zeal, but the mild and kind professor was powerless to stem the tide.

The Reformation was in imminent danger. There was no one at Wittenberg able to lead the stream into its proper course. Melanchthon and his friends entreated Luther to return. Before this, Luther at the Wartburg, anxious to appear again upon the scene of his former conflicts and labors, had sighed, "O would that I were in Wittenberg!" But when, he heard of the excesses of Carlstadt and his followers, and when his friends continued to entreat him to return, he could no longer remain in seclusion. The elector however refused to consent to his going back to Wittenberg. He commanded him to remain on the Wartburg, since he could not protect him in Wittenberg. Should he return thither, Duke George of Saxony would no doubt demand the immediate execution of the imperial edict. But it was utterly impossible to keep the bold Reformer at the Wartburg. He was impelled by an irresistible power to return to the battlefield and to lead on in person the little host fighting for the truth.

On the 1st of March 1522, Luther left the Wartburg, the place of refuge, where he had been securely kept. At Borna, near Leipzig, he informed the Elector of his departure. His letter to Frederick the Wise is a grand memorial of unshaken faith in the promises of God. A few extracts are here given. Luther writes: "This I have written to your Electoral Grace, for the purpose of showing you that I proceed to Wittenberg under a far higher protection than that of the elector. Nor do I at all intend to request protection from your Electoral Grace. Yea, I conceive that I could protect your grace more than the same could protect me. And if I knew that your grace could or would protect me, I would not come. This cause is not to be and cannot be assisted or promoted by means of the sword; God alone must do all here, without any human interference or addition. Therefore he who believes most will here protect most. As I, accordingly, perceive that your Electoral Grace is still very weak in the faith, I can by no means look upon you as the man who is able to protect or rescue me. And as your grace further desires to know what you ought to do in this matter, conceiving to have done far too little, I answer submissively: That your Electoral Grace has already done far too much, and ought to do nothing at all."

After his arrival at Wittenberg the Reformer delivered in succession eight sermons with reference to the existing troubles. By means of his sound and clear evangelical teaching he soon restored order where confusion had prevailed. In these sermons Luther showed that the followers of the

Zwickau prophets at Wittenberg had not acted in the Spirit of Christian charity toward their brethren and sisters in the faith. He told his hearers to be on their guard, so that Wittenberg might not become a Capernaum. Of the great claims and pretenses of the new prophets and of their boasting Luther said: "My dear friends, the kingdom of God does not consist in speeches or in words, but in power and action. For God does not want hearers and repeaters only, but followers and doers, who keep the Word and exercise themselves in the faith which works by love." He admonished his hearers to exercise the virtue of patience which worketh hope, and showed that we must not always do everything which we have a right to do, but to yield up our right whenever it may be necessary for the welfare of our neighbor, even as St. Paul did, who said: "All things are lawful for me; but all things are not expedient." And again "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." He instructed his hearers that in religious matters no force or compulsion should be employed, and that Christians should not make use of violent measures in bringing men to a knowledge of the truth. God's Word alone must be the means of leading sinners to Christ. He made plain the true nature of the Kingdom of Christ, in these words: "The kingdom of God does not consist in outward things which can be touched and felt, but in faith and power." In like manner Luther preached on all the points at issue, and in a short time order was restored in Wittenberg.

The Reformer also met in private the prophets of Zwickau. He patiently permitted them to state their fanatical cause and plead their ridiculous claims, and then very plainly showed them that all that they had said was contrary to the Word of God, and that their views were nothing else but the suggestions of a distorted imagination. And when these miserable fanatics, instead of answering Luther's objections to their absurd claims, endeavored to evade his statements, he demanded of them that they should substantiate their teachings with miracles, of which they had boasted. But they refused to perform miracles and simply threatened that Luther would yet be constrained to believe their teachings. But the Reformer said to them: "The God whom I worship and serve, will well know how to restrain your gods, that nothing of all that will happen." On the same day that Luther said this, the false prophets left Wittenberg, and sent to him from Kemberg a letter full of bitter reviling and horrid imprecations.

Peace and order having been restored in Wittenberg, Luther, by the invitation of John the Constant, brother of Frederick the Wise, proclaimed the doctrines of the Reformation in Zwickau, Borna, Erfurt and Weimar. The labors of the Reformer were unceasing. Beside his lectures at the University he was also engaged in literary labors and controversial writings. Henry VIII., King of England, entered the arena as the champion of popery. He aspired to be an author and wrote a book against Luther, entitled, "Defense and Maintenance of the Seven Sacraments against Martin Luther." Of the

latter the king said in his book: "Oh, what an instigator of hateful pride, reproach and division in Christendom is this! What a fiendish, hellish wolf is he, seeking ways and means to destroy the sheep of Christ! What a veritable member of Satan is he, attempting to tear the believing members of Christ from their head!" For his ridiculous production, Henry VIII, received from the pope the high-sounding title of "Defender of the Faith." Luther answered the King's book in a very severe and caustic treatise. Concerning the report that the King himself, had not written the book, Luther said: "That is a matter of indifference to me, whether King Henry or Conrad, or the devil himself wrote it. He that speaks falsely, speaks falsehood, but I do not fear him." Again he says in this treatise: "The pope and King Henry of England match well together. The former, I conceive, has inherited his papacy with just as good a conscience as the latter his kingdom. Therefore they flatter one another, as mules are wont to rub one another when they are together." So bold was the man, of whom Dr. Krauth well says: "Potentates feared him, and little children played with him."

CHAPTER IV.

Further Labors and Conflicts.

In the year 1522 Luther wrote a large number of treatises on different religious subjects. Besides the writings mentioned in the preceding chapter, he also wrote on the abuse of the Mass, on spiritual

and monastic Vows, on the innovations of Carlstadt, on prayer to the saints, on the Pope's Bull concerning the unworthy eating of the Lord's Supper, and on other matters. By these different treatises the principles of the Reformation were disseminated, not only throughout the whole of Germany, but also through many other countries of Europe.

Germany, the land of Luther's birth, is the Fatherland of the Reformation. "In the history of the Reformation, Luther is incomparably the greatest name," says Hallam, the historian. John Clark Ridpath says of Luther, (*History of the World*, Vol. II, p. 599): "He was regarded as the exemplar and epitome of the Reformation. To him the other leaders of Protestantism looked as to a general whose right it is to command." From Wittenberg, as from a common center the doctrines of Luther which are the doctrines of the Word of God, were carried into almost every country of Europe. Students from almost every land came to Wittenberg to study true Christian theology under Luther and his associates.

In 1522 there also appeared in print Luther's admirable translation of the New Testament in the German language. He had already completed the translation at the Wartburg. After his return to Wittenberg, he, together with the learned Melancthon, revised the work, and it first issued from the press on the 21st of September 1522. Three printing presses daily printed ten thousand sheets, and the book was sold for one and a half florins. When we estimate the purchasing power of money in that

time at double what it is now, (a fair estimate), a copy of Luther's German New Testament would have cost \$1.50 of our money.

By the circulation of the New Testament the cause of the Reformation was greatly strengthened and furthered. The Romanists were not slow in recognizing the danger threatening the papacy, and did all in their power to hinder the sale and circulation of the book. A Romanist, a bitter enemy of the Reformer, writes as follows: "In a marvelous manner did the printers multiply the copies of Luther's New Testament, so that cobblers and women, and every layman acquainted with German letters, most eagerly read it as the source of truth, and by frequent reading impressed it upon their memory. Many indeed presumed to obtain so much knowledge within a few weeks that they ventured to dispute about the faith and the Gospel with Masters and Doctors of sacred Theology; for Luther had long taught them that even Christian women are priests, and indeed that every one that is baptized is as much priest as a pope, a bishop or a presbyter. The great mass of Lutherans give themselves a great deal more trouble to learn the Scriptures thus translated than do the Catholic people, who let the priests and monks attend to that."

In the same year (1522) portions of the Old Testament were finished and issued in print. But the publication of the whole Bible was not undertaken for several years. Duke George of Saxony issued a mandate, commanding his subjects to deliver to the courts all copies of Luther's German

translation of the New Testament. This despotic measure was intended to stop the circulation of the Word of God among the people. Luther now wrote a treatise concerning the powers of civil government and showed how far Christians were bound to obey it. In this treatise he teaches that although temporal government is the ordinance of God, yet in matters of Christian faith and conscience, government must not use force or compulsion. He says "that the temporal government must particularly abstain from compelling any person to believe, since faith is a free act, yea, a divine work of the Spirit, and cannot be exacted or produced by external power." Again he says, "that the temporal power has no authority to require anything in matters of faith, and if, for instance, it was commanded in Meissen, Bavaria and in the Mark, to deliver up the New Testament to the government officers, it could not be done without hazard to the soul, since he that did so was delivering Christ into the hands of Herod." Concerning the prevention and punishment of heresy, he said: "This is the work of the bishops; to them such office is committed, and not to the princes. For heresy can never be prevented by means of power; there must be other means called into requisition here, for this is not a contest and a dispute for the sword." And again: "Heresy is something spiritual, which cannot be cut with iron, burnt with fire, or drowned with water."

It is evident from these utterances of Luther and from many others that might be quoted, that he was the champion and advocate of liberty of

conscience and religion, more than one hundred years before Roger Williams declared that the civil magistrate should not inflict punishment for purely religious error. The historian Bancroft says of Luther with reference to liberty of conscience: "Luther was more dogmatical than his opponents; though the deep philosophy with which his mind was imbued repelled the use of violence to effect conversion in religion. He was wont to protest against propagating reform by persecution and massacres; and with wise moderation, an admirable knowledge of human nature, a familiar and almost ludicrous quaintness of expression, he would deduce from his great principle of justification by faith alone, the sublime doctrine of freedom of conscience."

Pope Leo X. died in 1521 and Adrian VI. ascended the papal throne in the year following. Adrian reigned but a short time, for he died in 1523. It is said that he attempted to introduce reforms, but he certainly gave offense to the clergy by acknowledging that errors were held in the Church. In one of his works he very naively admitted that a pope might err even in matters of faith! He did not possess the talents and abilities of his predecessors, but was nevertheless earnest, zealous, and severe in attempting to put down Luther's heresy, which in spite of all opposition was steadily progressing. The "Holy Father" did not hesitate to abuse the Reformer and to attack his personal character. But Luther cared nothing for these vile calumniations, and heartily laughed at the imbecility of this weak pontiff.

The pope addressed a severe letter to the elector, Frederick of Saxony, which concluded with these words: "Pope Adrian and the pious Emperor Charles, whose truly Christian mandate against the Lutheran heresy thou hast not dreaded to violate, live in perfect agreement. Therefore turn you and repent, thou and thy unhappy seduced Saxons, unless you wish to have both swords, the papal and the imperial, put against you." The elector replied, "that he did not doubt but that the pope thus expressed himself in his communication, not of his own accord, but at the instigation of his enemies, and that it had been and still was his intention so to deport himself as it became a Christian and a dutiful son of the Christian Church." Luther was much distressed that the elector should be threatened on his account. He said: "Did I but know of a way how to deliver the elector out of all this difficulty, without reproach to the Gospel, I would not spare my life."

Pope Adrian however met with no favor at the Imperial Diet in Nuremburg in 1522. He was told very plainly and positively that the many shameless abuses of the papal court, by means of which the German nation was so heavy burdened and oppressed, were the principal causes, why the papal and imperial decrees and edicts against the heretic Martin Luther could not be executed. And finally, a free and untrammelled general Council of the Christian Church was earnestly demanded.

In the meantime the influence of the Reformation continued to spread. A number of distinguished German noblemen and cities espoused

Luther's cause and called evangelical ministers. Among these cities were Zwickau, Altenburg, Eisenach, Magdeburg, Frankfort, Nuremberg, Ulm, Strasburg, Breslau and Bremen. Prussia, the country of the religious and military order of the Teutonic Knights, as a whole, accepted the doctrines of the Reformation.

Whilst the good work was thus prospering in Germany, violent persecution raged in the Netherlands against the adherents of the Reformer. On the 1st of July, 1523, two Augustinian monks, Henry Voes and John Eschen, were burnt at the city of Brussels, because they confessed the truth of the Gospel of Christ, and would not recant. These two faithful witnesses were the first martyrs in the Netherlands in the time of the Reformation. Luther, hearing of their martyrdom, sent a consolatory letter to the "Christians of Holland and Brabant," in which he admonished them to constancy and fortitude in persecution. He also composed a beautiful hymn in honor of the two youthful martyrs. With reference to their bodies being burnt at the stake, the Reformer sings :

"Their ashes fly upon the gales,
And distant lands shall view them,
Nor brook, nor pit, nor grave avails,
The foe cannot subdue them.
Those who in life, by murderous hand,
To silence had been driven,
Now dead, break forth in every land,
In joyful songs to heaven —
No fiendish arts assail them."

These indeed were "times that tried men's souls." Many former friends of Luther now stood

aloof or even openly forsook the cause of the Reformation. His former friend and spiritual adviser, John von Staupitz, retired to Salzburg in Tyrol. He was a pious mystic, who indeed deeply deplored the abuses existing in the Church, but did not possess the qualities necessary for a reformer and leader. His alienation from the cause of the Reformation painfully affected Luther. The learned and scholarly Erasmus, who had at first heartily applauded Luther's course and conduct with reference to the papal indulgences and other matters, cut off all communication with the cause of the Reformation, and said "that he would rather sacrifice a part of the truth than destroy peace." Luther very properly regarded him thereafter as a superficial, worldly-minded man, who loved ease more than the truth.

During these conflicts the Reformer was not only engaged in controversy, but also in planting and building. He reformed the order of divine service, excluding all improper, unchristian additions made under the rule of the papacy. He introduced the singing of German chorals or hymns at church. In 1524 the first German hymn-book, containing but eight hymns, appeared in Wittenberg. Among these hymns was the one beginning with the words: "Nun freut euch, liebe Christen g'mein." ("Dear Christians one and all rejoice." No. 250. Ev. Luth. Hymnal).

CHAPTER V.

New Controversies and the Insurrection of the Peasants.

Pope Adrian VI. having died September 14, 1523, Clement VII., of the house of Medici, succeeded him. The pope despatched Cardinal Campeggius as legate to the Diet of Nuremberg to labor in the interests of the papacy. Clement also sent a friendly letter to the Elector of Saxony by the legate. The latter declared, however, that before anything could be done with reference to the peace of the Church, it was necessary to consider how the imperial edict of Worms might be carried out. The emperor, through his ambassador, at the Diet, complained that his edict had not been observed, and demanded that it be executed in the future. But the princes, most of whom were well aware that the tyrannical provisions of the edict could not be enforced in Germany, answered that they would do what could be done. April 18, 1524, the Diet announced that the pope, in agreement with the wish of the emperor, would call a free, general council of the Church, to be held in some city in Germany. In the meantime the estates of the German empire should assemble at Speier to consider what ought to be done for the present time.

Shortly after the adjournment of the Diet some of the most zealous partisans of the pope, such as Archduke Ferdinand of Austria and other estates, principally bishops, assembled at Ratisbon, where

they resolved strictly to carry out the edict of Worms in their dominions, and to render each other assistance in doing this. Charles V., then in Spain, was highly displeased with the decrees of the Diet at Nuremberg and peremptorily ordered the estates to carry out the edict of Worms. Concerning Luther the emperor said: "That inhuman and unchristian Luther endeavors by means of his pernicious and fiendish poison to bring destruction upon the bodies and souls of all, and through his craft and wickedness to attain to greatness and respectability before men like Mahomet."

Although Luther did not concern himself much about imperial edicts and the decrees of imperial Diets, he nevertheless, in order to show the common people the inconsistency of his enemies, published a treatise entitled: "Two imperial, discordant and contradictory edicts concerning Luther." In this treatise he accuses the emperor and princes of falsehood and double-dealing. According to edict of Worms he was to be treated as a heretic, but according to the decrees of Nuremberg it was to be ascertained at the Diet to be held at Speier whether he was a heretic or not. At one and the same time he was to be held as one already condemned, and yet the German nation was told to wait and see whether he should be condemned or not. He thought the princes must have been mad or intoxicated when they decreed this. He warned the nobility, saying: "What if Luther's life were of so much moment with God that if he did not live, none of you would be secure of life and dominion, and his death would be the destruction of you all?" He

referred the princes to Psalm 33, 10: "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought." He pointed to the example of Pharaoh, who was overthrown in spite of his power, and said that God hurls the mighty ones from their thrones. He concludes: "This is meant for you, dear lords, even now, if you make a misstep."

Luther saw the storm arising which should soon break out in the insurrection of the peasants. He tried to avert the awful calamity which was about to befall the German empire, but the princes would not heed his earnest warnings. He was deeply grieved at the violent, disorderly and fanatical doings of Karlstadt, at the divisions caused by the Sacramentarians with respect to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and at the disturbances caused by Thomas Muenzer, an adventurer and revolutionist of the worst kind. After Luther's return from the Wartburg Karlstadt appeared to be in favor of good order and a conservative cause, but he secretly sympathized with the fanatical Muenzer. When the parish of Orlamuende, near Wittenberg, became vacant, Karlstadt, in a disorderly manner, took possession of it and began to introduce violent reforms. He taught that bread and wine in the Lord's Supper were not the body and blood of Christ, but merely signs. He ordered that pictures and crucifixes be removed from the Church and destroyed, and taught many strange and fanatical notions.

Muenzer, however, was the leader of the new fanatical movement. In 1523 he had secured the parish of Allstedt. But his career as a religio-political revolutionist began in 1520, whilst he was

preacher at Zwickau. Before this time he had manifested his passion for secret societies and conspiracies, and shown his talents as a demagogue. At Allstedt he became bolder and publicly published his fanatical doctrines. He said that it was his purpose to establish a kingdom of saints, to destroy the wicked, and thus to introduce the millennial kingdom and reign of Christ on earth. Princes and nobles who would not fall in with his views, should be killed. This miserable fanatic violently assailed Luther and accused him of living a carnal, an epicurean life, calling him the Wittenberg pope, the arch-heathen, arch-knave, tricky raven, dragon, lion, basilisk, etc. Luther, hearing of the calumniations of Muenzer and his deluded followers, said to his friends: "Let them alone;" "let them say what they will; if some people are led astray, it happens as in war. Where there is a conflict or battle some will be wounded and fall."

In the year 1524 Luther, at the elector's wish, visited Weimar, Jena, Orlamuende, and other places, to instruct the people with reference to the fanatical doings of Muenzer, Karlstadt and others. To some cities Luther sent letters, warning the people to beware of the false prophets. At Jena, Luther met Karlstadt, and between the two there was a stormy discussion. The Reformer openly accused Karlstadt of being in union with Muenzer and the other fanatics, and Karlstadt complained that Luther had treated him severely, and that he did wrong in putting him in the same list with the rebellious and revolutionary spirits. At Orlamuende, the headquarters of Karlstadt, Luther could not ac-

comply with anything. He himself narrates his experience there in these words: "When I reached Orlamuende I discovered what kind of seed Karlstadt had sown there, for I was greeted with such a blessing as this: 'Depart in the name of a thousand devils, and may you break your neck before you leave the city.'"

On his return to Wittenberg the Reformer reported to the elector in writing. Concerning Karlstadt he wrote, that he thought there was but small hope of his returning to the right way; he considered him the most dangerous enemy of the Reformation. As the violent conduct of Karlstadt was dangerous to the public peace, which he greatly disturbed, the elector ordered him to leave the country. Karlstadt now first went to Strasburg and thence to Basel. At the latter place he published several scurrilous pamphlets against Luther, whom he called a double papist and friend of Antichrist. Luther answered him in January and February, 1525, in the treatise bearing the title: "Against the Heavenly Prophets." With reference to the complaint of Karlstadt, that he had been exiled from Saxony, Luther replied, that this had been necessary because Karlstadt had made common cause with the rebellious Muenzer, whose avowed object it was to subvert the civil government by force and to establish a new government in its stead.

The storm which had been gathering for years in Germany now broke out with great fury. The demagogue Muenzer, who had been in southwestern Germany preaching insurrection and revolution,

came to Muehlhausen. By his fair speeches and fine promises he attached to himself many deluded persons. He obtained charge of a parish, and from the adjoining country the peasants came to him in great numbers to hear the wonderful revelations of the new prophet. Luther well said that Muenzer became both king and emperor of Muehlhausen.

Among the peasantry there had long been great dissatisfaction with the existing order of things. In the south of Germany there were many revolutionary elements among the people, and an insurrection broke out with much violence which extended east and west and into the centre of Germany. In Suabia the peasants formulated their demands in twelve articles. Some of these demands were just and moderate. The peasants demanded better treatment from their lords and the right to call their own pastors, the abolition of feudal serfdom, the free use of the forest, the cessation of arbitrary authority on the part of the landed proprietors, and the like. But the time for making such demands was ill-chosen, and the violent and disorderly manner in which these demands were made was highly objectionable. Worse than all, the religious fanaticism of Muenzer and the "heavenly prophets" was intimately blended with these political measures. Ridpath says (*Cyclopedia of Universal History*, Vol. II., p. 582): "It will be seen at a glance that these poor peasants knew what they wanted, but did not know the impossibility at that time of obtaining a redress of political and social grievances by means of the religious agitation which had been started by the Reformers."

In May, 1525, Luther issued a treatise entitled: "Exhortation to Peace, in reply to the Twelve Articles of the Peasantry in Suabia." In this treatise he says that what pleased him best in these articles was the petition of the peasants for better instruction. Luther then first addresses the princes and nobles, and shows that they, together with the clergy, were to blame for the insurrection, because they raged against the Gospel and in their secular governments oppressed and ground down the people with heavy burdens, such as taxes and duties. At the same time the nobility required such vast sums for display and splendor, that the poor could not endure it any longer. He said the nobility could not blame the Gospel, as being the cause of the insurrection, but that the lords themselves were to blame. He entreated them to heed his warning, to fear God, and to make some concessions to the peasants. He then admonished the latter, not to abuse the Divine Name and bring reproach upon the Church of Christ by lawless acts. He defined the powers of the temporal governments and warned the peasants to beware of conspiracy and rebellion. He admonished them not to resist the government, even when this sometimes acted unjustly, not to employ force or violence, but to endure all with patience. Finally he admonished both the nobility and the peasantry to settle their difficulties in the spirit of equity and justice, and not to resort to violence. He reminded the nobility of the fact that tyrants generally meet with a violent end, and showed the peasantry that violence in political matters never ended well. He maintained that

neither party could contend with a good conscience, since both were in the wrong; the nobility, by oppressing the poor; and the peasantry, by abusing the Christian name and employing violence to accomplish their ends. He deplored the loss of life and the destruction of property which would ensue, should the insurrection become general. At the end of the treatise he advised that arbitrators be appointed by the nobility and the citizens to investigate and settle the questions at issue, in a Christian manner and according to human rights and civil compacts.

Unfortunately for Germany, Luther's warnings and counsels were not heeded. The peasants persisted in the insurrection. Luther, speaking of the horrors of that time, says: "When I look about me I see them come to blows, steal and rage and act like raving dogs; but especially violent is that arch-fiend that rules at Muehlhausen" (Thomas Muenzer.) Great multitudes flocked to the standard of the insurgent leader to fight for the Lord, as they said. The peasants plundered, burned, and murdered according to their hearts' desire. They reduced cloisters, castles and palaces to ashes, leaving nothing but ruin and desolation behind them. Luther now issued a severe writing against the rapacious and murderous insurgents, and called on all Christian authorities to rise up in their might and suppress the awful revolution.

May 15th, 1525, Thomas Muenzer with his insurgent army of 8000 peasants was utterly defeated in the battle of Frankenhausen in Thuringia. He was taken prisoner and executed. The peasant

army was entirely destroyed and the insurrection suppressed. The atrocities which the insurgents had committed upon the nobility were now avenged in a fearful manner. Some of the enemies of Luther unjustly charged him with the blame of the cruelties committed upon the peasants by their captors, whilst other enemies of the Reformer foolishly accused him of having incited this awful insurrection. Both these charges are equally unjust and absurd. Luther severely reproved the victorious nobility for its cruelties against the peasants. Neither had he incited the peasants to rebellion, but, on the contrary, taught them to be obedient to the government. The voice of history vindicates the Reformer with reference to his course in this awful calamity. Ridpath says: "But the' calm-minded Luther was wiser than the fanatic multitudes. With heavy heart he took sides against them. He saw clearly enough that all hope of success in an effort for religious reform would be jeopardized if the cause should be yoked with the schemes of Muenzer. He accordingly issued a pamphlet condemning the insurgents, and exhorting his friends and followers to wash their hands of fanaticism. The real greatness of the Reformer appeared in the transaction; for he used his influence with the nobles of the revolted districts to save the peasants from punishment." (Cyclopedia of Universal History, Vol. II., p. 582-583).

CHAPTER VI.

The Work of Building.

The Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, died May 5th, 1525. Luther said of him, "He was a child of peace and peacefully did he enter into rest." Frederick was a wise and prudent prince, a regent who had diligently and earnestly labored for the material and moral welfare of his people and for the preservation of peace and good order in the German Empire. On his death-bed Frederick received the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in both kinds (i. e. the bread and the wine), according to Christ's institution. At his burial in the Castle church in Wittenberg Luther delivered two funeral sermons on I Thess. 4, 13-18. Duke John was the successor of Frederick in the government of the Electorate. Concerning the deceased Elector, Luther wrote to his successor: "It looks as if God had purposely removed him, as he did King Josiah, that he might no longer behold the wickedness of the world. During his whole life he governed in a quiet and peaceful manner, well meriting his name Frederick (i. e. peaceful, peaceable) in word and deed. And such peaceful souls are not to be begrudged that they no longer live in unrest and strife; for they would occasion us more misery did we see them passing their last days amid such turmoil."

On the 13th of June, 1525, the great Reformer in the forty-first year of his life entered into the estate of matrimony with Catharine von Bora, an escaped nun from the cloister Nimptsch, near



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Grimma, in Saxony. Concerning this important event in the life of Luther, Gustav Freytag says: "From that time the husband, the father, the citizen, became likewise the Reformer of the domestic life of his nation, a pattern for filial reverence, marriage, the training of children, as well as for the social family life—the very blessings of his life on earth, of which Protestants and Catholics may alike partake, have sprung from Luther's marriage."

Meantime the Reformation continued to progress and to gain a firmer foothold. The fanatical doings of the Zwickau prophets and insurgent peasants had endangered the Reformation, but Luther gained a decisive victory over these fierce, destructive, revolutionary elements, so that he could now devote himself more especially to the work of building up the Church of the Reformation. It is true, that this period was not without its controversies, but in the main Luther's work consisted in constructing the building, the materials for which he had been diligently gathering. New, but good regulations, with regard to the order of public worship, were introduced. It is true that in the beginning of the Reformation Luther was satisfied with turning the hearts of his hearers away from false and superstitious conceits concerning mere external forms of worship, and to lead them to a right knowledge of the truth. He at first hesitated to introduce new forms of worship, but now, believing that his hearers were enlightened and directed by the grace of God, he published in 1525 "A form to celebrate Christian Mass and to go to the table of the Lord." In the following year he

published his "German Mass and Order of Divine Worship." But Luther was no stickler for mere forms. He said: "Yet I do not herewith desire that those who already have their good regulations, or who through the grace of God can make better ones, should reject them and yield to us. For I do not entertain the view that Germany must entirely adopt our Wittenberg regulations." As there was a scarcity of German hymns suitable for Divine service, Luther, following the example of the ancient fathers of the Church, composed a number of German hymns.

In the year 1524 the Reformer published his great treatise, entitled: "To the burgomasters and counsellors of all the cities in Germany, that they should establish and maintain Christian schools." He complained that everywhere in Germany schools for the young were declining, and called upon the civil authorities to make provision for the proper instruction of the young people. He said that heretofore vast sums had been expended or rather wasted upon indulgences, masses, vigils, etc., but that now in gratitude to God something should be expended for schools to educate youth. He showed that not only for the sake of the Word of God and of the true Christian religion, but also for the preservation of temporal prosperity, boys and girls should be educated in a good, Christian manner. Boys should be properly trained, so that when they become men they might be capable of governing the country, and girls should be trained, so that when they became women they might know how to govern the house, children and servants. And

because the German princes were too busy with their foolish and frivolous pleasures, the Reformer urged the magistrates and counsellors of towns and cities to take this matter in hand.

The Reformer, having completed the establishment of an order of divine service in the churches, next turned his attention to the spiritual reform of the parishes. He showed the elector the necessity of a visitation, and the prince gave his consent to the measure. In February, 1527, the matter was again taken into consideration and inspectors or visitators were appointed.

Meanwhile the political condition of the German Empire was, upon the whole, rather favorable to the cause of the Reformation. The emperor, pushed on the east by the Sultan of Turkey, Solyman II., and on the west by King Francis I., of France, had not been able to execute the edict of Worms with a great degree of severity. At the Diet of Speier (1526) it was agreed, that each member of that body should conduct himself in all matters pertaining to the edict in view of his accountability to God and his duty to the imperial government. However, there was in some parts of Germany much persecution waged by the Romanists against the adherents of Luther. In the year 1526 Luther sought a reconciliation with King Henry VIII. of England and Duke George of Saxony. Concerning the former, King Christian of Denmark had given Luther a favorable account, and entreated him to write to the English monarch. Luther, desiring peace and the progress of the Reformation, followed King Christian's advice

and expressed to Henry VIII. the wish to be on amicable terms with him. He also wrote a friendly letter to Duke George. But the well-meaning Reformer was very much disappointed in his expectations. Both the king of England and the duke of Saxony, continued to show their bitter animosity to Luther in their replies to his friendly letters. The proud and pompous king of England absurdly interpreted Luther's letter as a recantation of his principles. This greatly provoked the Reformer, so that in 1527 he published a second book against Henry, in which he triumphantly refuted the silly slanders of the proud monarch. As for Duke George, it must be said that he continued to hate Luther as heartily as before.

In 1525 and 1526 Luther published several didactic and consolatory writings, such as a translation of the book of Deuteronomy with comments, the explanation of Exodus, from the first to the nineteenth chapter, the explanation of the Prophet Habakkuk, and also the explanation of the four consolatory Psalms (38th, 62nd, 94th and 109th).

The year 1527 was one of great suffering to the Reformer. His noble, loving heart deeply sympathized with all that were made to suffer on account of their loyalty to the truth of the Gospel. Leonard Kaiser, who had spent two years studying in Wittenberg, was burnt at the stake in Scherding, in Bavaria, August 16, 1527, by the Romanists, as a martyr to the cause of the Reformation. M. George Winkler, pastor at Halle, was assassinated whilst on a journey to Aschenburg, whither he was summoned by the Archbishop of Mayence to an-

swer for preaching the doctrines of the Reformation and administering the Lord's Supper according to Christ's institution. Luther was deeply affected by the death of these faithful witnesses.

The Reformer at this time also suffered much from bodily illness. In January, 1527, he was attacked by a violent rush of blood to the heart. In addition to this he was sometimes nearly overcome with anxious forebodings and spiritual troubles and trials. Possessing a conscience that was governed and directed in all he said and did by the Word of God alone, he felt the great responsibilities resting upon him as the chosen instrument in the hands of God to effect the Reformation of the Church.

In his spiritual and bodily trials and afflictions Luther was often cheered and comforted by such friends as Bugenhagen, Jonas, and others. John Bugenhagen, also known as Dr. Pommer or Pomernus (born near Stettin, 1485, died 1558), joined Luther in 1521. He was appointed professor at the University of Wittenberg and pastor of the principal church there. He was one of the great workers in the cause of the Reformation in Church and school. He established the Reformation in Brunswick, Hamburg and Luebeck, and infused new life and vigor into the University at Copenhagen. Bugenhagen possessed an extraordinary talent for organizing the work of the Reformation. Justus Jonas, (born in Nordhausen, Saxony, 1493, died 1555), first studied law and afterward theology at Erfurt. He became professor at Wittenberg in 1521 and was one of the principal laborers in the Reformation and an intimate friend of Luther. His

earlier writings are mostly polemical, and his letters are of great interest and importance to the history of the Reformation.

During his illness Luther once said to Bugenhagen and Jonas: "Because the world delights in falsehood, many will say that I retracted my doctrine before my death; I therefore earnestly desire you to be witnesses of my faith and confession. I say with a good conscience, that I have taught correctly and wholesomely concerning faith, the cross, the Sacraments, and other articles of Christian doctrine. Many accuse me of being too unsparing and severe when I write against the papists, sectarians, and others, rebuking their false doctrine, ungodly life, and hypocrisy. I have indeed, at times, been severe and sharply assailed my adversaries; yet so, as never to have repented of it. Whether now I am severe or moderate, I have not sought the injury of any one, much less the loss of a soul, but rather the good and salvation of every one, even of my enemies."

In the same year (1527) the plague raged at Wittenberg, in consequence of which the University, at the command of the Elector John, was transferred to Jena. But Luther, together with his family, Dr. Bugenhagen and the deacons remained at Wittenberg. Luther declared that it was the duty of pastors or preachers to remain at their posts in times of danger, since they were most needed then.

In October, 1528, the important work of the inspection or visitation of the churches was begun. Long before this Luther had made the necessary

preparations and now himself took charge of the inspection of the electorate of Saxony proper and the districts of Meissen. In the vicinity of Wittenberg he found the general condition of the churches rather favorable, but other parts of the country were not in so good a condition. The Reformer himself examined the people on the different doctrines of the Christian religion and very kindly instructed them. Not only among the common people, but even among the clergymen the Reformer found the most deplorable ignorance in religious matters. Many clergymen had become notorious among the people on account of their immoral conduct and their pursuit of secular business. But very few schools were found in the country, and the ignorance prevailing among the peasants was very great. In view of this deplorable state of affairs, Luther was led to prepare his two Catechisms, the larger and the smaller, in the year 1529. In the preface to his Enchiridion or Smaller Catechism, he says: "The deplorable destitution which I recently observed, during a visitation of the churches, has impelled or constrained me to prepare this Catechism or epitome of Christian Doctrine, in such a small and simple form. Alas, what manifold misery I beheld! The common people, especially in the villages, know nothing at all of Christian doctrine; and many pastors are quite unfit and incompetent to teach. Yet all are called Christians, have been baptized, and enjoy the sacraments, although they know neither the Lord's Prayer, nor the Creed, nor the Ten Commandments, and live like the poor brutes and irra-

tional swine. Yet they have, now that the Gospel has come, learned to abuse all liberty in a masterly manner." The preparation of the two Catechisms was certainly one of the most important works of the great Reformer. Especially is the small Catechism the most perfect model of catechetical literature that has ever appeared. It has well been called "the little Bible of the laity," because it contains in few and simple words the substance of all the important doctrines of the Bible. This little book will continue to live in the hearts of all true Lutherans as the briefest, the plainest, the best "order of salvation" drawn from the Word of God.

CHAPTER VII.

The Marburg Conference.

Whilst Luther was diligently engaged in teaching and writing for the edifying of the Church, another storm was gathering which was soon to break out with great jury. The leader of the opposition to the plain and simple teachings of the Reformer with reference to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper was the fanatical Dr. Karlstadt. In 1524 he had already declared that this sacrament had no other purpose than to remind communicants of Christ's sufferings and death. According to Karlstadt, bread and wine in the Eucharist were not the body and blood of Christ. He perverted and distorted the words of our Lord's institution of the holy Supper in a ridiculous manner. The words of Christ, "This is my body," Karlstadt in-

terpreted so as to say, that the Lord pointed to His body, then sitting at the table in the midst of the disciples, as the sacrifice He would offer for them on the cross, and in memory of this sacrifice they should partake of the bread and wine He gave them.

As long as Karlstadt was at Wittenberg he did not dare to teach this false doctrine openly. But when he left Wittenberg and settled at Orlamuende among the Zwickau fanatics, he boldly proclaimed his errors and thereby caused much strife and confusion. Making common cause with the false prophets of Zwickau, who were the originators of the insurrection of the peasants, Karlstadt was ordered by the Elector of Saxony to leave the Electorate, in order that peace might be preserved. After aimlessly wandering to and fro for some time, Karlstadt settled for a while at Strasburg, where he attempted to win over to his side Bucer, Capito and others. These men wished to adjust the differences between Luther and Karlstadt on the doctrine of the Eucharist, but finally took sides in all essential points in the controversy with the fanatical Karlstadt. The latter also found supporters in Zwingli, Oecolampadius, Schwenkfeld and others. Ulrich Zwingli (born in the canton of St. Gall in Switzerland, January 1, 1484 — died on the battle-field of Kappel, whither he had accompanied the Protestant army as chaplain, October 11, 1531), was pastor of the cathedral at Zurich and is sometimes called the Swiss Reformer. But Zwingli's work in Switzerland cannot properly be called a Reformation, since he greatly erred in important doctrines. The

Church historian Guericke very properly designates Zwingli's movement as an ultra reformation, because the would-be-reformer, especially in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, went beyond the form of sound doctrine as taught in the Word of God. Zwingli's movement may be truly characterized as falsely spiritualizing and rationalizing important doctrines and institutions of the Church, an arbitrary separation of Word and Spirit, and of the invisible Divine gifts in the holy Sacraments from the bearers of these gifts, namely, the water in baptism and the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. Zwingli's so-called reformation was in many things evanescent and superficial; as, for instance, when he taught that the sacraments are essentially figurative only, and the communication of the Divine attributes to the human nature of Christ is only a figure of speech. With reference to the relation between Church and State Zwingli taught, "that the administration of the Church belongs, like all administration, to the State authorities." But he adds, "if the State authorities go beyond the ordinances of Christ, let them be deposed." It is needless to remark that the adoption of such a principle as here announced by Zwingli cannot fail to produce horrible confusion in Church and State.

John Oecolampadius (born 1482, in Weinsberg in Wuerttemberg — died 1531 at Basel), was the friend and companion of Zwingli. He was not bold and original in his views, but very cautious and moderate. His earlier and cruder opinions concerning the Lord's Supper appear to have given way in after life to sounder views, according to which he

regarded the Lord's Supper as a means of grace for the sustenance of Christian life. Oecolampadius was well disposed toward Luther and his co-laborers. In his views on predestination he differed from Zwingli. Caspar Schwenkfeld of Silesia, (born 1490), was a fanatic, who perverted the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper, interpreting these words so as to say: "My body is this, namely the true bread for your souls; my blood is this, namely the true drink for your souls." He denied that the body and blood of Christ were really and essentially present in the sacrament. He also taught that the external Word of God was powerless, if the internal word did not precede it.

These were the men who opposed and attacked Luther's pure, scriptural teachings concerning the Lord's Supper, and who wrote several books against the Reformer with reference to the question at issue. But several Suabian theologians, such as Brentius, Schnepf and others wrote in defense of Luther. The latter greatly desired peace and did not begin this controversy, but was constrained to defend the true doctrine. As he was burdened at this time with many labors he could not write a book of his own, and therefore published the writings of the Suabian theologians, with a preface written by himself, in which he showed the inconsistency of his opponents as well as their unscriptural positions. Afterward he wrote a treatise bearing the title: "That the words of Christ: This is my body, still stand firm against the fanatics." This treatise appeared in the month of May, 1527. He demonstrates in this treatise, "that it is not contrary to the Scrip-

tures and the articles of faith, that the body of Christ is at the same time in heaven and in the sacrament, in order to leave to the words (of institution) their simple and natural import." And as his opponents denied the real presence of the body and blood in the sacrament, notwithstanding Christ says: "This is my body which is given for you," Luther says, "they" (his opponents) "have no need whatever of these words in the sacrament, but it is quite sufficient for them to observe the Lord's Supper with these words: Christ took the bread, thanked and brake it and gave it to His disciples, and said: Take, eat, this do in remembrance of me. For these words abundantly teach that the bread is to be eaten, and Christ to be remembered therewith. But this is the sacrament of the fanatics, wholly and entirely." Zwingli and Oecolampadius replied to Luther's treatise, and in March, 1528, the Reformer published his "Confession concerning the Supper of Christ," in which he earnestly defends what he had taught before, and bravely declares his intention by the grace of God, to stand firm in defence of the truth.

The landgrave, Philip of Hesse, desired very much to make an end of this controversy and selected Marburg as the place where a colloquium of the two parties should be held. Luther expected but little good to result from this meeting, but as the landgrave manifested so much diligence and zeal in his attempts to promote peace and union, and in order that Luther's opponents might not say that they desired peace more than he did, he accepted the landgrave's friendly invitation to

come to the colloquium. Zwingli and Oecolampadius arrived at Marburg September 29, 1529, and Luther, accompanied by Melanchthon and a few friends, arrived on the following day. Both parties were received and entertained by the landgrave in a princely manner at his castle. In accordance with the wishes of the latter, Luther held a private interview with Oecolampadius and Melanchthon with Zwingli on the first day of October. In these interviews it was clearly shown that the Swiss theologians had taught erroneously, not only concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, but also concerning other doctrines. Thus Zwingli had virtually denied the doctrine of original sin by teaching, that not to fear God and not to believe in Him in a state of nature could not be considered as sin, and that sin merely consisted in external wicked works or deeds; that the Holy Spirit was not given by or through the Word and Sacraments, but without or beside these means of grace. Finally it was shown that the Swiss did not teach clearly concerning faith and justification. The Swiss theologians yielded in the points mentioned and gave up their errors. They were pleased with the instruction they received from Luther and Melanchthon on these points, but did not agree with them on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

On the following day a public colloquium was held, attended by a considerable number of theologians of both sides, courtiers and counsellors of the landgrave, and invited guests. The four combatants, Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli and Oeco-

lampadius, were seated at a table before the landgrave. The public conference having been opened, Luther said that it was necessary to discuss the summary of Christian doctrine with the Swiss theologians, because there were many errors in Zwingli's writings, and as the Swiss had taught but little concerning justification, it was to be feared that they understood the Gospel very imperfectly. Luther then declared, that he had taught the pure, scriptural doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper and that he would abide by what he had taught. Zwingli remarked, that the object of the colloquium was not to discuss any other doctrines, but those pertaining to the Lord's Supper; but if the debaters should come to an agreement on this point, other subjects could be taken up for discussion. So the article on the Lord's Supper was discussed and the Swiss theologians advanced three arguments against the doctrine of the real, essential presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament, as taught by Luther.

The first argument against the real presence was advanced by Zwingli. He quoted the words of Christ, "The flesh profiteth nothing," (John 6, 63.) to show that Luther's doctrine was not true. Luther replied, that it was shocking to say that the flesh of Christ, which was given for our redemption, cannot profit us anything. In the passage quoted, Christ does not mean His own flesh, for in the 54th verse He says, that whoso eateth His flesh and drinketh His blood hath eternal life. In the 63d verse our Lord speaks of our weak and sinful human flesh, in which there is no spirit,

unless the Holy Spirit quickens it. It is our human flesh that profiteth nothing and does not comprehend the Word and work of God. But even if it be admitted that Christ spake of His own flesh in the 63rd verse, this would not prove anything against the real, essential presence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament, because the words according to Augustine's interpretation, may be explained to mean, that the flesh of Christ does not profit those who do not believe.

Zwingli's second argument against the doctrine of the real presence was taken from philosophy. He said "that a body could not be in more than one place at a time; now the body of Christ was in heaven; hence it cannot be on earth in the sacrament." Luther answered that human reason and philosophy cannot sit in judgment on the omnipotence of God. Zwingli furthermore said "that God did not propose to us such incomprehensible things" as the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the holy Supper. Luther answered that whatever God tells us in His Word must be accepted on our part in humility and faith, incomprehensible as it may appear to us. When Zwingli asked, how it was possible that a wicked, impious priest could bring it about that the body and blood of Christ could be present in the Lord's Supper, Luther answered "that this is not done through the merits of the priest, but through the institution of Christ." The efficacy of the means of grace does not depend upon the holiness of the priest or preacher administering them, but upon the Divine institution and com-

mand. To these clear and plain declarations of Luther, Zwingli offered no reply.

The third argument against the doctrine of the real presence was advanced by Oecolampadius, substantially as follows. Sacraments are signs; signs signify or symbolize something; hence the body of Christ is only signified, but not really present in the sacrament. To this it was answered "that it was true that sacraments are signs, but that we are not to make them signify anything different from what Christ made them signify. Again, that sacraments are signs, is to be understood especially that they signify the promises attached to them. Therefore we are not to proceed presumptuously in giving significations, but are to see what signification God's Word itself gives."

On the following day the discussion was continued, but no agreement resulted from it. Finally Zwingli and Oecolampadius asked, that they might be acknowledged as brethren in the faith and the landgrave warmly supported them in their request. Zwingli was moved to tears and said: "There are no people on earth with whom I would rather be united than with the Wittenbergers." The Swiss theologians did their best to make it appear, that there was no essential difference between them and the Wittenbergers; but Luther, who well discerned the erroneous, spiritualizing and rationalizing tendency of Zwingli and his associates, said to them: "Your spirit is different from ours." In all his teaching, preaching, debating and writing the great Reformer was governed alone by the Word of God

in its plain, simple and obvious meaning, whilst the rationalizing Zwingli exalted the finite and erring reason of man as the authority according to which the Word of God was to be judged. This was the difference between the two men; and it certainly was a very essential difference, so that no union was possible. Luther was astonished, that the Swiss theologians should consider him a brother in the faith and yet condemn his doctrine on the Lord's Supper as false. This inconsistency on their part was proof to him, that they did not esteem their own doctrine very highly, although they condemned his teaching. However, he extended to them "the hand of peace and love," saying, that whilst all severity and hostility should cease, yet each party should be free to maintain and defend its doctrine in a Christian manner.

But in order that the discussion might not be altogether fruitless, certain articles, on which both parties agreed, were drawn up and signed. These articles, fourteen in number, treat of the doctrines of the Trinity, the assumption of human nature by the Son of God, the Person of Christ, original sin, redemption, faith, justification, the external Word, baptism, confession, and civil government. The fourteenth article which treats of the Lord's Supper, reads thus: "Concerning the Supper of our dear Lord Jesus Christ we all believe and teach, that both kinds (i. e. bread and wine) are to be used according to the institution; that the mass, moreover, is not a work through which one can obtain grace for another, dead or living; but that the sacrament of the altar is a sacrament of

the true body and blood of Jesus Christ, and the spiritual reception of this body and blood especially necessary for every Christian. So also as to the use of the sacrament; that as the Word is given and instituted by God the Almighty, in order that the weak consciences may be moved to faith and love, so the sacrament has been given for the like purpose. And although we have not at this time been agreed whether the true body and blood of Christ are bodily present in the bread and wine, each party is, nevertheless, to exercise Christian love toward the other, as far as each conscientiously can, and both parties are diligently to pray to God the Almighty, that He wil through His Holy Spirit establish us in the right understanding. Amen."

A contagious disease, called the "English sweat," which first appeared in England in 1485, now broke out in the vicinity of Marburg, and the landgrave hastened to dismiss the colloquium. Concerning its issue the Reformer upon his return to Wittenberg said, that his opponents had been humbler and friendlier than he expected them to be, but that they were not yet ready to accept the doctrine of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament. Luther thought the Swiss theologians would have yielded, but supposed their adherents would not permit them to do so. He states the reason why he and his friends could not receive the Swiss as brethren in these words: "For if we would receive them as brethren and sisters, we would have to approve their doctrine." And although no union between the Wittenbergers and Swiss had been accomplished, Luther said: "There-

fore the matter rests in hope. I do not say that there is a brotherly union, but a kind, friendly agreement, that they may freely ask of us what they need, and we in turn serve them. If you now diligently pray, this friendly agreement will become a fraternal union.”

It is evident from these generous words of the great Reformer that he earnestly desired a true, real, scriptural union. But alas! the desire of his heart was not fulfilled. He soon heard that the Swiss proudly boasted of their pretended triumph over him at Marburg, and he doubted the sincerity of their humility and friendliness at the Colloquium. The hope of a union between Wittenberg and Zurich was not realized.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Diet at Speier and Other Matters.

A short time after the beginning of the controversy on the Lord's Supper, Luther became involved in a controversy with Erasmus on the subject of man's free will. Luther had formed a very good opinion concerning Erasmus on account of his learning, and the latter was at first well disposed toward Luther. But with all his learning Erasmus was very superficial in his religious convictions and soon became cold, yea, hostile toward the cause of the Reformation. Flattered by the Romanists, even by Pope Adrian himself, and induced by the king of England, Henry VIII., Erasmus published against Luther a treatise bearing the title, *De libero arbitrio*, (concerning free

will.) This however was an unfortunate venture, for Erasmus himself admitted, that he had left his proper sphere and his own free will by writing on free will. In his views on the freedom of the will Erasmus followed the old errorist Pelagius, who died about the year 420 A. D. Pelagius taught that man is able by the exercise of his own will to convert himself without the grace of God. Luther successfully refuted the errors of Erasmus in a treatise: *De servo arbitrio*. This treatise was translated into German by Justus Jonas, under the title "The free will is nothing." It is shown in this book, that after the fall the will of man is unable to choose what is right in the sight of God, and that the will, which is held captive by evil, must first be made free by divine grace, so that it can choose what is right. Whilst Luther was thus engaged in teaching and defending the true doctrines of the Word of God against errorists of all kinds, threatening clouds were gathering on the political horizon of the German Empire. The Turks were steadily advancing toward the eastern border of Germany. In 1529 Luther's treatise on the war against the Turks appeared in print. The Reformer appealed with great vigor and earnestness to the German nation to fight valiantly against the Turkish power, which was a standing menace to the peace of Christian Europe. Some time later, when the Turkish army was besieging Vienna, Luther published his "Sermon to the army against the Turks." But the invaders were foiled in their attempt to take Vienna and obliged to retreat.

The Emperor of Germany called an Imperial Diet to meet at Speier, in the Bavarian Palatinate in 1529. Besides discussing the Turkish war, measures to suppress the "Lutheran heresy" were also to be taken into consideration. The majority of the members of the Diet, being fanatical Romanists, gave greater attention to suppressing the "Lutheran heretics" than to defending the empire against the common foe of Christendom, the Sultan of Turkey. Accordingly, the former decree of the Diet at Speier (1526), according to which the princes and rulers of the empire were to act in harmony with their obligations to God and the emperor, until a general Church Council could be held to decide on the religious controversies, was formally revoked by the Romanist majority. The despotic and cruel edict of Worms, by which Luther had been put under ban and interdicted, and his adherents and followers were to be persecuted, was affirmed by a majority of the Diet. Lutheran rulers and princes were forbidden to introduce further reforms into their dominions, forbidden to abolish the Romish mass, and members of the Roman Catholic Church were not allowed to adopt Luther's doctrine. Sacramentarians and Anabaptists were to be severely punished, and no minister should be allowed to preach the Gospel except in harmony with the teachings of the Church of Rome.

It was the purpose of the Romanist princes at this Diet violently to stop the growth and progress of the Reformation, yea, to crush it entirely. The cruel and tyrannical points mentioned above were embodied in an edict and adopted by the majority

of the Diet. The Lutheran princes and estates now presented a formal, solemn protest against the action of the majority. This protest was signed by the Elector John of Saxony, the Margrave George of Brandenburg, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt, the Chancellor Foerster of Lueneberg, and the representatives of fourteen free and independent cities. The protest declared that the action of the majority of the Diet was in direct opposition to the resolutions of the previous Diet of Speier, where each estate was to act in harmony with its obligation to God and the imperial government, until a general Church Council should decide all controversies. The protest furthermore declared that the protestants were true and faithful subjects of the emperor in all civil and political relations, but that in the questions at issue, which involved faith and religion, they should act in accordance with the dictates of Christian conscience. Finally the protest declared itself against the tyrannical provisions of the edict adopted by the Romanist majority of the Diet, and the protestants publicly said that they would not consent to the measures of the majority.

It was by this solemn act of protestation against the tyranny of Rome that the adherents of Martin Luther received the name of Protestants. In our days this name is often applied in a general manner to all denominations opposed to the Church of Rome, and very often this good and noble title is used as a cloak to hide the greatest errors and even unbelief itself.

The Romanist princes and estates at the Diet of Speier would not even recognize the right of the evangelical minority to offer a protest, and the emperor peremptorily ordered the Protestants to abide by the decision of the majority. The friends and supporters of the Reformation, feared the worst from the Romanists, and their fears were not unfounded. The Landgrave of Hesse favored the formation of a league of Protestant princes and rulers to defend the cause of the Reformation against the tyranny of Rome, but Luther, who was heartily averse to employing bodily force and worldly craft and policy in establishing and defending the Gospel, opposed the landgrave's scheme. The noble and truly Christian Reformer well knew that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds (2 Cor. 10, 4.). However the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the representatives of Nuremburg, Strasburg and Ulm entered into a defensive league. Luther put no trust in human alliances, but relied only on the Lord of hosts.

CHAPTER IX.

The Diet at Augsburg.

Up to the year 1530 the renewed and purified Church had not made a formal, public and common confession of faith. But in the providence of God the time had now come when the friends and supporters of the Reformation were called upon to make a public confession of their faith and to give

testimony for the truth of the Gospel. This took place at the Imperial Diet held in the city of Augsburg, in Bavaria, in the year already mentioned.

The historian Ridpath says that "the Diet of Augsburg was an assembly only second in importance to the Council of Constance." But in our humble opinion the Council of Constance, which was remarkable only for condemning and burning the two "heretics," Huss and Jerome of Prague, and which, as far as ecclesiastical reforms were concerned, was a miserable failure, cannot be compared with the Diet of Augsburg, where for the first time the Church of the Reformation in a public manner gave formal expression to the principles and doctrines the great Reformer had been preaching nearly thirteen years. At Augsburg the first symbolical book of the Lutheran Church was given to the world.

The Emperor, Charles V., in letters dated January 21, 1530, invited the German princes and estates to meet in a national assembly in the city of Augsburg, on the 8th day of April of that year. The Diet was called to deliberate on the war with the Turkish Sultan and the religious controversies of the day. The Elector John of Saxony, acting on the good advice of his chancellor, Dr. Brueck, invited Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, and other eminent theologians, to meet him at Torgau for the purpose of preparing a formal statement of the faith professed by the friends of the Reformation, to be submitted to the imperial Diet. Philip Melanchthon drew up the writing in which the pure, evangelical doctrines were clearly and positively

stated. This document was formed on the basis of former labors of Luther and received the hearty and unconditional support of the great Reformer. The seventeen articles of Christian doctrine, as previously formulated in the Schwabach Articles, were embodied in the writing drawn up by Melancthon. Thus resulted the Augsburg Confession of Faith. This document was signed by John, Elector of Saxony, George, Margrave of Brandenburg, Ernest, Duke of Lueneburg, Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt, and the Magistrates of Nuremberg and Reutlingen. It was agreed by the signers to lay the document before the Diet as the public confession of faith of the Protestant estates. The theologians who prepared the confession declared their willingness to appear personally before the Diet instead of the Elector John of Saxony, in order that his life might not be endangered, but the brave confessor said with much warmth: "God forbid that I should be excluded from your midst! I will confess Christ with you."

The other German princes were equally courageous and resolved, if necessary, to sacrifice all for the sake of the Gospel. The Elector John in company with the theologians, Jonas, Spalatin, and Melancthon, was the first prince who arrived at Augsburg, where he entered on the second day of May. Luther, who was under the papal ban and had been formally outlawed by the emperor, remained in the castle at Coburg, where for a while he lay dangerously ill in body and at times depressed in spirit. It was whilst thus suffering that the great Reformer

wrote the soul-stirring battle-hymn of the Reformation: "A Tower of Strength our God is still." Dr. Schaff says of this grand old hymn: "It is as much the great popular song of the German nation as Luther himself is the hero and typical representative of German life."

Whilst at Coburg Castle the Reformer kept up a continual correspondence with his friends at Augsburg, which was distant from the former place about four days' travel. At Augsburg Melancthon was busy putting the finishing touches to the great document to be laid before the Diet. The scholarly "preceptor of Germany" sought to present the pure, evangelical doctrines of Luther in elegant and vigorous German and in agreement with the orthodox teachings of the Universal Christian Church. Luther, to whom a copy of the confession had been submitted, said of it: "It pleases me right well, and there is nothing that I would change or improve. Nor would it be expedient for me to do so, for I cannot tread so gently and so quietly. May Christ our Lord grant that it may bring forth much fruit, as we all hope and pray it will."

Whilst at Coburg Castle Luther received intelligence of his worthy father's death. The sturdy, honest old miner died in the triumph of faith May 29, 1530. Luther was greatly affected by the news of his father's earthly departure. His truly pious mother died in the true faith June 30, 1531. During her last illness she received a very consoling letter from her affectionate son.



1526
VIVENTIS·POTVIT·DVRERIVS·ORA·PHILIPPI
MENTEM·NON·POTVIT·PINGERE·DOCTA
MANVS

DA

At Coburg Castle Luther was visited by Martin Bucer, the friend of Zwingli. Bucer, who came to Luther with the consent of the elector, desired a union, or at least amicable relations between the friends of Luther and the friends of Zwingli. Luther said, that as far as he was concerned he should not be wanting in the effort to promote love and union, if the friends of Zwingli would only teach in harmony with God's Word and give up their uncertain and contradictory explanations of the Bible. The Reformer was also visited by Urbanus Rhegius, then preacher at Augsburg and afterward a very active promoter of the cause of the Reformation in Northern Germany, in Lueneburg, Hannover, and other places. Concerning his visit to Luther Rhegius afterward wrote: "At Coburg I spent a whole day with Luther, the man of God, and I never in all my life spent a more delightful day. For Luther is so mighty a theologian that there scarcely ever has been one like him."

From Coburg the Reformer also wrote his "Admonition to the Clergy assembled at the Diet of Augsburg," in which treatise he warned the members of the Romish hierarchy to cease from persecuting evangelical believers. He says to the Romish clergy: "In short we all know that you live without God's Word, but we have God's Word. Therefore our most anxious wish and most humble prayer is, that you would render honor to God, learn to know yourselves, repent and reform. If you will not do so, then take me: if I live, I will be your plague, if I die I will be your death: for God has set me against you; I must, as Hosea says,

be to you as a bear and lion in the way of Assur; you shall never have any rest for my name till you reform or perish." How the tender, delicate ears of the Romish clergy must have tingled and rung at these thrilling words of the man of God.

Luther was also engaged whilst at Coburg in translating the prophetic books of the Old Testament into the German language. He also wrote a treatise to preachers, admonishing them "that they should exhort the people to send their children to school," and also "an exhortation to partake of the body and blood of our Lord," together with other treatises. But as diligently as he studied and wrote so diligently did he also pray that the friends of the Reformation assembled at Augsburg at the Diet might have the courage to confess Christ before all men. Luther's courage, joyfulness, faith and hope in these trying times were wonderful. The mild and yielding Melanchthon was often grievously tormented with cares whilst at Augsburg, but Luther greatly encouraged him. He wrote to Melanchthon: "Thy philosophy torments thee thus, not thy theology; precisely that which seems also to vex thy Joachim" (Joachim Camerarius, at that time Professor of Greek at Nuremberg; he was a friend of Melanchthon and resembled him in his mildness), "as if with these your unprofitable cares you could accomplish anything. What can the devil do more than kill us? What? I ask. I pray thee, since thou so nobly strugglest in all other respects, struggle also against thyself, thy greatest enemy, who supplies Satan with so many weapons against thee. Christ has once died for our cause, but for right-

eousness and truth He will not die, but lives and rules."

The Confession of Faith of the Protestant princes and estates was ready to be submitted to the Diet. The emperor was not at all willing that the Confession should be made public to the German nation. Ridpath says: "It is highly illustrative of the spirit and manner of the age that the emperor, when the great document was to be read before the Diet, took care, with his usual subtlety, that the same should be delivered, not in the great hall, but in the bishop's chapel at an early hour in the morning, before the people could assemble to hear the doctrines of their faith promulgated. And it is equally illustrative of the temper of the times that the people gained information of what was intended, and gathered by thousands outside of the chapel, and that Dr. Bayer, who was appointed to read the Confession, delivered the same from an open window in such a loud and ringing tone that the multitudes heard every word with distinctness. The Germans had already made up their minds to take a personal interest in the religion which they were expected to profess and practice." (Universal History, Vol. II., pp. 595-96.)"

The unaltered Confession of Faith, the first public symbol of the Lutherans, as the same was read and delivered to the Emperor Charles V., of Germany, at the Diet of Augsburg, on the 25th of June, 1530, contains an address to the emperor, twenty-one "Articles of Faith and Doctrine," and seven "Articles concerning which there is dissen-

sion and in which are related the abuses which have been corrected."

Dr. Jonas wrote a detailed account of the submitting of the Confession to the Diet to Luther, who rejoiced very much that so noble a confession had been publicly made before the national assembly of the German Empire. It was significant that the emperor asked to have the Confession read to the Diet in Latin, but the patriotic Elector of Saxony said, "We are here on German ground." Accordingly the document was read in the German language. The reading made a deep impression on all present, even on the Romanists.

Luther in letters addressed to Brentius, Agricola, Spalatin and other friends, expressed his great joy and satisfaction that he had by the grace of God been permitted to see the day when Christ was confessed in so public a manner and by such noble confessors. He said: "that here the Word was fulfilled: *I spoke of Thy testimonies before kings,* and that this word would also be fulfilled; *and was not ashamed;* for it is said: *he that confesses me* (so He spoke that lieth not), *before men, him will I also confess before my Father, who is in heaven.*" The Reformer greatly lamented that he had not been able to be present at the Diet to join with his friends in confessing Christ.

At this time the preaching of the evangelical doctrine was prohibited at Augsburg by the government. The noble Elector John was greatly pained at this prohibition. But Luther wrote to him: "I shall think that you are well revenged for the prohibition of preaching. They (the Roman-



DR. BAIER READING THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION BEFORE THE DIET OF AUGSBURG.

ists), will not suffer their servants to hear the preachers, but are compelled to hear something worse (as they style it), from such great princes, and be silent. Christ, truly, is not silent at the Diet; and if they were mad, they are compelled to hear more from the confession than they would have heard from the preachers in one year. Thus is verified what St. Paul says: God's Word will not be bound. If they prohibit it in the pulpits, they must hear it in the palaces. If poor preachers dare not declare it, great princes and lords proclaim it. In short, when everything is silent, the stones will cry out, as Christ Himself says."

At this time Luther still hoped that by the grace of God peace and friendly relations could be preserved between the Protestants and Romanists in Germany. But Rome demanded an unconditional surrender on the part of the Protestants. The emperor ordered the Romish theologians present at the Diet, Eck, Wimpina, Coehlaeus and others to prepare a refutation of the Protestant Confession. The first draft of this "refutation" turned out to be so miserable a failure, that the emperor rejected it. A reply to the Augsburg Confession was not laid before the Diet until nearly three months after the promulgation of the Confession. This second refutation was answered by Melancthon in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession. Dr. Brueck, chancellor of the Elector of Saxony, presented the Apology to the emperor on the 22nd of September, but the monarch refused to receive the document. The Romanists, being in the majority at the Diet, declared that the

Protestants were utterly refuted, and the latter were peremptorily ordered to surrender to Rome, which the noble confessors of course refused to do. Luther was well pleased with the courage of these brave men and wrote to them: "You have accomplished more than was to be expected, for you have rendered to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's: to the emperor complete obedience, in that you have appeared with so much expense, trouble and grievance; to God, the chosen sacrifice of the confession, which will force its way through to the courts of kings and princes, that it may rule in the midst of its enemies, and be heard in every land, in order that those who do not believe may have no excuse." Again, Luther wrote to the Elector of Saxony and other confessors: "You have confessed Christ, offered peace, rendered obedience to the emperor, borne injustice, been rewarded with calumny, and have not returned evil for evil; in short, you have worthily performed the holy work of God, as it becomes his saints. Let us now also rejoice in the Lord, and be joyful ye righteous; look up and lift up your hands, for your redemption draweth nigh."

On the 23d day of September, 1530, the Elector of Saxony with his associates departed from Augsburg and met Luther at Coburg. On the 10th of October the party arrived at Torgau, where Luther preached on the Sunday following in the presence of the elector in his court-church. The elector once declared that the cross of Christ was worth to him more than his official ermine; the latter

would remain in this world, but the former would accompany him to heaven." To the emperor he once said: "You will find me in all things to be a true and peaceful prince; but you will never be able to alienate me from God's Word. For I know most assuredly that the doctrines contained in our Confession will prevail against the portals of hell."

And here, at the conclusion of the Diet of Augsburg, where the truth of the Gospel was so nobly and heroically confessed by men of whom the world was not worthy, but whose names will be held in everlasting remembrance, we will conclude the third part of our history of the Reformation.

PART IV.

THE LABORS AND VICTORIES OF THE REFORMATION.

**FROM THE CONCLUSION OF THE DIET OF AUGSBURG TO
THE CONCLUSION OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.
A. D. 1530-1563.**

CHAPTER I.

The Smalcald League and the Peace at Nurem- berg.

The true evangelical doctrines had been nobly confessed at Augsburg. But constant danger threatened the cause of the Reformation from the attacks of the fanatical Romanists. The Protestant estates of the German Empire determined to protect themselves against their enemies. Accordingly a league, to continue for a period of six years, was formed after preliminary proceedings by the Elector John of Saxony, Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, the three Dukes of Brunswick-Lueneburg, Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt, the Dukes Albert and Gebhard of Mansfeld, the North German cities of Magdeburg, Bremen and Luebeck, and the South German cities of Strasburg, Constance, Lindau, Ulm, Reutlingen, etc. This confederation, which was formed at Smalcald, near

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Fulda, in Hesse, December 25, 1530, and ratified by all the parties interested in it in March 1531, is known in history as the League of Smalcald.

At the close of the Diet of Augsburg the emperor had given the Protestant princes and estates a respite until the 15th of April, 1531, in which time they were to take into consideration their return to the Church of Rome, and to submit to the authority of the "holy father." The parting address of Charles V. at the conclusion of the Diet was a menace against the friends of the Reformation. The danger was great. Protestant jurists gave their judgment to the effect, that inasmuch as the emperor had no authority to order or decide anything in matters of faith, the Protestant party would be justified in opposing the emperor, should he order or decree anything against the faith or religion of the Protestants, and that the latter could oppose the emperor so much the more when he would usurp powers not belonging to him, since the evangelical estates had appealed to a free, general Council of the Christian Church. Protestant theologians, although opposed to using force in a cause which was spiritual in its nature, did not object to an alliance formed for mutual self-defence and the preservation of religious peace. The Smalcald League was not formed in order to resist any political measures of the imperial government, but to secure to the German nation religious peace and amity. The emperor and his brother Ferdinand, the new king of Rome, did not expect so much energy and vigor on the part of the evangelical estates of the empire, and, not being in readiness

at this time to begin actual hostilities, opened negotiations with the Protestants which resulted in the Nuremberg treaty of peace (July 23, 1532). It is true that the Protestants did not gain anything more by this arrangement than they possessed before, but they secured a more quiet condition of affairs in a religious point of view. Both parties expected a general Church Council, although Protestants had little to hope for from a council presided over by the pope or one of his creatures.

Before the conclusion of the Nuremberg treaty of peace, Luther published a "warning to his dear Germans." In this writing he complained that his former exhortations to the Romish clergy that they should desist from inciting their followers to persecute the evangelical party for the sake of the Gospel, had been fruitless. He declared that, should a war occur in consequence of the efforts of the Romish clergy to incite persecution against the friends of the Reformation, the latter could not be to blame. The Protestants "had thus far taught and lived in all quietness, had never drawn the sword, never imprisoned, burnt, murdered or robbed any one, as the opponents had thus far done. Besides this, the Protestants had most deeply humbled themselves at the Diet, prayed for peace and quiet, and made every effort that the Lord would permit them to make, that no charge of causing either war or insurrection could be brought against them before God or the world." Furthermore Luther said, that if the Romanists should bring on war against the evangelical party, no man should allow himself to be forced into obedience to the tyrannical behests of the Romanists.

But Charles V. could not at this time devote much attention to the Lutheran "heretics," because he was considerably harassed by the Turkish Sultan. Even his fanatical brother, Ferdinand, advised him to maintain peace with the Protestants in consideration of their assistance in resisting the Turks. Meanwhile the respite given the Protestants to return to the "holy Mother Church" had passed by, but no hostile demonstrations were made by the imperial government. In the spring of 1532, when the Sultan of Turkey made extensive preparations to begin a vigorous campaign against Germany, a war of the Romanists against the Protestants would have been an impossibility, and various negotiations led to the Peace of Nuremberg, as already mentioned.

The noble Elector John of Saxony lived to see the conclusion of the treaty of Nuremberg. The Reformation was assured, at least for a time, of comparative quiet, and a possible civil war with all its attendant horrors was averted. But the pious elector was not permitted to see the further development of the Reformation. On the 15th of August, while engaged in the chase, he was seized with apoplexy and died on the day following. His remains were interred in the castle-church at Wittenberg, beside the grave of the illustrious Elector Frederick the Wise. Luther himself preached the funeral sermon on this occasion from 1 Thess. 4, 13-18, and Melancthon delivered a Latin funeral oration. The elector was justly called "the Constant" or "the steadfast," on account of his constancy in the faith and his steadfastness in con-

fessing and defending it. Frederick was distinguished by his wisdom and prudence and the Elector John by his piety and kindness of heart. Luther once said "Wisdom died with the Elector Frederick, but piety with Elector John."

CHAPTER II.

The Translation of the Bible Into the German Language.

After his return from Coburg castle, at the close of the Augsburg Diet, to Wittenberg in October, 1520, Luther took the place of Bugenhagen as pastor of the principal city church. Bugenhagen, one of the best organizers of the work of the Reformation, went to Luebeck to organize the elements of the cause, as he had already done at Brunswick and Hamburg. Luther now completed his translation of the prophets and wrote many good treatises of a reformatory character.

John Frederick, called the Magnanimous, succeeded John the Constant in the electorate of Saxony. He was born at Torgau, in Saxony in 1503, became elector in 1532, and died in 1554. As the leader of the Smalcald League, the elector was defeated by the imperial army at the battle of Muehlberg in Saxony in 1547. He was taken prisoner, deprived of his dominions, and imprisoned five years, but he bravely and cheerfully endured all his severe trials, and was afterwards released and restored to his family and friends in the year 1552.

Luther was quite intimate with John Frederick. Both the elector and his wife, Sibylla, a princess of Cleve, took great interest in the Reformation as well as in the welfare of Luther and his family. The domestic life of the princely couple, which was very exemplary, is thus described by the Reformer: "In them, thank God, you will find a pure married life and course of conduct, a true voice and a benevolent hand; they help the poor, build churches and schools, preserve an earnest, faithful heart, honor the Word of God, protect the good and punish the bad, and maintain peace and good government; their married life is so pure and praiseworthy that it is a good pattern for princes, nobles, and every one else; the princess is a quiet Christian housewife; at home they daily read God's Word and have it expounded, they pray and praise God, to say nothing of what the elector himself otherwise reads and writes every day."

Toward the close of August, 1531, the electors of Mayence and the Palatinate dispatched messengers to the Protestants for the purpose of renewing negotiations concerning peace and friendly relations between the two parties. Luther, Melancthon and Jonas submitted the following opinion: "In the doctrine, as exhibited in the Confession, we cannot and dare not yield, though in outward ceremonies we may, for the sake of peace, yield in some measure, since we did not condemn and change the ceremonies because they were all evil, but because the observance of them was required as necessary to salvation, which is not to be endured." In the following year (1532) the Electors of May-

ence and the Palatinate again began negotiations with the Protestants to bring about an amicable agreement, and Luther himself was favorably disposed to furthering friendly relations between Protestants and Roman Catholics. A convention of the princes was held at Schweinfurt, where a political agreement was made that was to remain in force until the expected general Church Council should be held. There seemed to be a general desire on the part of the German princes and people to establish better, friendlier relations between the two parties, at least as far as civil and political matters were concerned.

There is not space within the limits of this brief history to mention the many labors of the great Reformer in teaching, edifying, warning, counseling, comforting and consoling churches and individuals. Luther's activity as a preacher and writer was wonderful. His gifts and talents were extraordinary. Melancthon said of him: "Luther is too great, too wonderful for me to depict in words. If there be a man on earth I love with my whole heart, that man is Luther. One is an interpreter, one a logician, another an orator, fluent and beautiful in speech, but Luther is all in all; whatever he writes, whatever he utters, pierces to the soul, fixes itself like arrows in the heart—he is a miracle among men." The learned Johann Gottfried Herder says of him: "Luther has long been recognized as teacher of the German nation, nay, as co-reformer of all Europe that is at this day enlightened. He was a great man and a great patriot. Even nations that do not embrace the

principles of his religion, enjoy the fruits of his Reformation. As a preacher, Luther spoke the simple, strong, unadorned language of the understanding; he spoke from the heart, not from the head and from memory. His sermons have long been the models especially of those preachers in our Church who are of stable minds."

During the summer of 1534 the entire Bible appeared in the German language. The translation of the New Testament had already appeared in 1522 and portions of the Old Testament came out from time to time. Finally, the whole Word of God of the Old and New Testament was given to the German nation in an excellent, yea, incomparable translation in 1534 as already stated. With reference to the translation of the Old Testament Luther once wrote to a friend: "Alas! what a difficult and great task it is to compel these Hebrew writers to speak German! How reluctant they are to forsake their Hebrew ways and adapt themselves to our rude German, just as if you would compel the nightingale to cease her melodious strains and imitate the monotonous, to her odious, cry of the cuckoo." Luther was pre-eminently the man above all others capable of rendering the Word of God into strong, pure, vigorous German. Heinrich Heine says of Luther: "He created the German language. He was not only the greatest, but the most German man of our history." Luther's translation of the Bible was a national work, an event which gave Germany the High German as the common language of the nation, the language of theologians and thinkers,

of poets and philosophers, of educators and historians. Concerning his labor in translating the Word of God into German, Luther once wrote to a friend: "I diligently exercised myself to employ pure and distinct German, and it often happened to us, that we were two, three and four weeks searching and inquiring for a single word, and after all sometimes failed of finding it. In Job, M. Philip, Aurogallus and myself, encountered so many difficulties that we sometimes scarcely finished three lines in four days. Now, my dear friend, that it is translated and finished, every one can read and criticise it, and you can now run your eyes over three or four pages without once stumbling, but do not perceive what rocks and blocks once covered the ground over which you now pass, as over a smooth surface, where we were made to perspire and to labor most strenuously before we removed such rocks and blocks out of the way that it might be easily passed. It is not difficult to plough when the ground is cleared; but to fell the trees, to root up the stumps, and to prepare the ground, to this no one is inclined. It is not possible to earn thanks from the world. God Himself cannot gain any thanks for the sun, nor for heaven and earth, no, not even by the death of His Son; let the world therefore have its way."

CHAPTER III.

Negotiations Concerning a General Church Council.

Pope Clement VII. and the Emperor Charles V. issued an address in the year 1533 to the Protestant estates of the German Empire with reference to a general Church Council. Luther published this address and praised the emperor for having persevered in his efforts until he obtained the promise of a general Council from Clement VII. In the month of June, 1533, the pope sent a legate and an attorney to Wittenberg for the purpose of negotiating with the elector. The ambassadors of the pope were honorably received and entertained at Wittenberg by command of the elector. But the theologians there had no interviews with the papal ambassadors. The elector asked the theologians what answer to give to the papal legate. Luther said that "the first condition is, that the universal and general Council which is to be convoked and held, shall be free, and be conformed to the custom of the Church, observed for many centuries past, from the beginning of the general and universal Councils to this time." This condition had been urged by the pope and appeared to be fair, but the words in which it had been stated were not clear and distinct, but vague and ambiguous. The pope desired a Council similar to the unfruitful Councils formerly held at Constance, Basel, Pisa and that most disgraceful of all, the Lateran Council at Rome, held under the pontificate of Leo X. The

proposition of Pope Clement VII. to hold a Council Luther considered as mockery and deception, since not the Word of God, but the pope himself would be the sole judge over the Council. He said: "The matter on account of which a Council is desired and is necessary concerns the pope and the custom of the Councils themselves, and they are to be a party, and not the judges; but the Word of God is to decide between the pope with his councils and us; wherefore also it is called a Christian, and not a papal council." In a second opinion Luther advised, that the articles calling a general Council should not be rejected by the Protestants, but accepted by them, so that the pope and the Romanists could not say that the Protestants were not willing to do anything to promote peace and goodwill. Luther's advice was: "That the articles should much rather be accepted, and the effort made to cast all the charges upon the pope himself by representing that the prayer had been presented to all the Diets for a free Christian Council, and the promise had also finally been given that his Imperial Majesty would endeavor to obtain such Council from the pope. That the pope however in the first article wholly refused such prayer, being unwilling to do his part, and plainly declaring that he would have the Council held in accordance with former rules and customs. For such a Council no one had prayed." Yet Luther advised the Protestants to take part in the proposed Council to show to the world that they desired peace and good will to prevail between them and the Romanists. In the third opinion Luther and his colleagues advised the Prot-

estant princes: "That they should by all means guard against incurring the charge of endeavoring to prevent the Council from being held, and that this one article only should be insisted upon, for which all nations also called, namely, that matters should be decided according to God's Word and not according to papal statutes. Thus misrepresentation would be guarded against." Finally, in a fourth opinion Luther and his colleagues advised: "Not to treat of anything further now, but what was necessary and expedient and to give no occasion to the pope or the emperor to prefer charges against us. If they then institute or do not institute a Council, there will be sufficient time to consult."

It soon became evident that Pope Clement VII. was not over-anxious that a free general Council should be held. There was nothing further done in the matter until after the death of Clement, when his successor, Paul III., who was elected pope in 1534, began negotiations with the Elector of Saxony. Paul III. sent Paul Vergerius as his legate to Germany to confer with the Protestant princes about a suitable place for holding the proposed general Council. Vergerius came to Wittenberg in the beginning of November, 1534. He entered the city with great array and was received and entertained at the Castle in a princely manner. The day after his arrival he invited Luther and Bugenhagen to breakfast with him. The following account of the interview between these three men is so interesting, that it is given here in full from Moritz Meurer's *Life of Martin Luther* (pp. 491-

493) ; "The papal legate, Paul Vergerius, who had been dispatched to Germany because of the Council, came also to Wittenberg, and on the day following invited Luther and Bugenhagen to breakfast. Both accordingly breakfasted with him at the castle. Concerning this meeting we have this report: On the Sunday of All Saints, the papal embassy having entered Wittenberg the evening before with twenty horses and one ass, and been very honorably received by the bailiff and conducted to their lodgings at the castle, Dr. Martin Luther was invited to an interview with the legate. Dr. Luther accordingly early that Sunday sent for a barber to have himself shaved and dressed. The barber having arrived, said, 'Doctor, how does it come to pass that you wish to be shaved so early this morning?' Dr. Luther replied, 'I have been invited to come to the legate of the holy father, the pope, therefore I must have myself dressed, that I may appear young; then the legate will think: What in all the world! If Luther is so young yet, and has occasioned so much trouble already, what will he not accomplish in the future?' And Master Henry having now finished shaving him, he dressed himself in his best apparel and hung a golden ornament around his neck, whereupon the barber said, 'Verily, Doctor, that will vex them.' Luther said, 'For this very purpose I do it. They have vexed us more than enough; it is necessary to act thus towards serpents and foxes.' To which the barber replied, 'Now, good Doctor, do you go in the name of God, and may the Lord be with you, that you may convert them.' Dr. Luther rejoined, 'That I

shall not do, but it may well happen that I shall read a good lecture to them and leave them to themselves.' And Luther, having spoken this, entered the carriage and drove to the castle; and as he was seated in the carriage, he laughed and said, 'Behold, here drive the German Pope and Cardinal Pomeranus; they are God's instruments and witnesses.' And thus he drove up to the castle and caused it to be announced that he had arrived. Thereupon he was immediately admitted and received, and he in turn received them, but not with such noble titles with which the legates of the popes were received in former times. And among other things they began to speak about a council, with reference to which Dr. Martin Luther addressed him thus: 'You do not seriously intend to hold a council, you are merely trifling; and even if you did hold a council, you would treat of nothing else than hoods, bald pates, food and drink, and other such nonsensical, useless and needless things, of which we verily know beforehand and are fully assured that they are of no account. But concerning faith and justification, as well as other useful and important things, how believers, for instance, may be united in spirit and faith, it is not at all your intention to treat, for it would discomfit you. We are fully persuaded through the Holy Ghost, on all points, and have no need of any council for ourselves, but desire it for the sake of those wretched men who are oppressed by your tyranny, for you do not know what you believe. Behold, now, if you are anxious, institute one, and by the help of

God, I shall come, even though I knew that you would consign me to the flames.' Then the legate said, 'In what city do you desire to have the council?' Luther replied, 'Wherever you deem it convenient, whether at Mantua, Padua or Florence, or where you see proper.' Then the legate inquired 'Would you come to Bononia?' Luther inquired in return, 'Whose is Bononia?' The legate said, 'The pope's!' Luther answered, 'Almighty God! has the pope also acquired possession of this city? yes, I will come thither.' Upon this the legate remarked that the pope would not refuse to come hither to you to Wittenberg. Luther rejoined, 'Very well, let him come, we should wish to see him.' The legate replied, 'How do you wish to see him, — with an army or without one?' Luther answered, 'As he deems proper, we will expect both.' Then the legate inquired of him, 'Do you also consecrate priests?' Luther replied, 'Certainly we do, for the pope will not consecrate or ordain any for us. And, behold, there sits a bishop whom we have consecrated,' pointing to Dr. Pomeranus. Concerning these and many other things they conversed together, which has not all become known. But in short, Dr. Martin Luther told the legate everything he had upon his mind, and which the necessity of the case demanded, without the least fear or terror and with great seriousness. And as the legate was now seated upon his horse and about to ride away, he said to Dr. Luther, 'See to it that you be prepared for the Council.' Luther replied, 'I shall come sir, with this my neck.' "

It will interest the reader to learn that ten years after the occurrence just related, Vergéius became a decided Protestant, a bold confessor of the truth and brave champion of the Gospel.

CHAPTER IV.

The Wittenberg Union.

Before narrating the events leading to the Wittenberg union, a brief account will be given here of the dreadful end of the fanatical revolution inaugurated by Thomas Muenzer and kindred spirits in 1525. Some of the deluded followers of Muenzer, escaping at the defeat of the insurrectionary army of peasants at the battle of Frankenhäusen in Thuringia, fought May 15, 1525, carried the ideas of a social, civil and religious revolution to the fanatical Anabaptists of Southern Germany, where these wild and erratic notions found a fruitful soil. Dreams and visions of a speedily approaching Millennium, the establishment of a visible, glorious kingdom of Christ on earth, took possession of men's minds. At Strasburg Melchior Hoffman announced the coming of the kingdom of the New Zion. In Muenster, the capital of Westphalia, John von Leyden (Johann Bockhold), a tailor by trade and a fanatic of the worst kind, boldly assumed the title of "king of Zion," and led the infatuated people to commit frightful, sensual excesses. He introduced polygamy, married fifteen wives, and lived in great splendor. For more than a year Muenster was the scene of great cruelty

and the most abandoned dissipation. In 1535 the neighboring princes conquered Muenster and the New Zion came to an inglorious end. John von Leyden was tortured to death and his body hung in an iron cage on the steeple of the St. Lambert's Church. After the suppression of this horrible fanaticism Menno Simon gathered the few remaining Anabaptists into small congregations, called Mennonites, from the name of their organizer, who justly abhorred the excesses of the fanatics of Muenster, but was attached to many errors in faith and doctrine.

Martin Bucer of Strasburg was much interested in trying to bring about a union of the Lutherans and Zwinglians. He visited Luther at Coburg, in 1530, and acknowledged that Christ's body and blood were really present in the Lord's Supper and received in the Sacrament as food to the soul. Luther was astonished, that Zwingli and Oecolampadius would not admit that the wicked as well as the righteous received the true body and blood of Christ orally with the bread and wine. He wrote to Bucer, that he thought it best to defer the matter of a union of the parties until they were better agreed, and that in the meantime God should be implored in earnest prayer to grant grace to all, so that a true, real union might be brought about. The great Reformer well knew that a merely external union, without harmony in faith and doctrine, could not produce an agreement. The authority of the Word of God having been restored by the Reformation, nothing would now have given Luther more pleasure than the true, sincere union

of all those claiming the name of Protestant. He said: "When this concord shall have been firmly established, I will sing with tears of joy, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.'"

Philip, landgrave of Hesse desired very much that a union of the Lutherans and Zwinglians might be brought about, and urgently requested Luther to assist in this undertaking. Of course nothing would have pleased Luther more than a true, permanent union of both parties, but he could not deviate in the least from the plain teachings of God's Word and hence would not agree to a mere, external union, which could not abide. In the year 1533 he had already warned the churches at Frankfort on the Main "to beware of Zwinglian doctrines and teachers," because he had heard that the preachers in this city, whilst pretending to be in agreement with him on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, really taught the Zwinglian doctrine. In like manner he wrote to the church at Augsburg. The noble-hearted Reformer did not wish the people to be deceived by secret Zwinglians, who pretended to be in harmony with him.

An interview took place at Cassel in Hesse, in the month of December, 1534, between Melancthon and Bucer concerning the Lord's Supper. Bucer declared his willingness to teach in harmony with the Augsburg Confession and the Apology. In the month of January, 1535, Luther wrote to the Elector of Saxony, that for himself he would not reject a union with the other party, but deemed it best not to conclude such union in haste and first

fully to discuss the question at issue with the other party.

After further negotiations a conference of representatives of both parties was held at Wittenberg, beginning May 22, 1536. Bucer expressed his great joy at meeting Luther and his associates and related how he had labored for years to bring about a union. Luther replied that he desired nothing more earnestly than a true spiritual union, but could not see how it could be established as long as Bucer held and defended the erroneous doctrines of Zwingli and Oecolampadius, as expressed in their writings. He thought it better to let the matter rest than to make it worse by a feigned union. Bucer said that there was no deception on his part, and that the writings of Zwingli and Oecolampadius had been published not only without his knowledge, but also contrary to his express desire. Luther repeated that he was in favor of a true union or none at all. Bucer and his associates would be required to renounce their errors and to confess and teach the true scriptural doctrine. Luther then showed that both parties had approached each other nearer and nearer, and said: "It is therefore necessary, now, in order to remove all cause for doubt or suspicion on both sides, that you and those who have been sent hither with you declare to us whether you teach and believe, that the bread is the body of Christ given for us, and the wine the blood of Christ, who has thus instituted it, whether the minister who dispenses it, or he that receives it, be worthy or unworthy." On the next day the conference was resumed, and Luther re-

peated what he had said the day before. He asked Bucer whether he and his associates were willing to retract their errors and to teach the scriptural doctrine of the real, sacramental presence of the true body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Bucer confessed that he had already retracted his errors, and would retract them again then and there, and that he for himself and in the name of the Swiss theologians would confess "that the bread in the Lord's Supper was truly the body of Christ and the wine was truly the blood of Christ," and that Christ's body and blood were truly received, not only spiritually, but also orally, by worthy communicants unto salvation and by the unworthy unto damnation. Luther now questioned the associates of Bucer, and they all declared that they believed and taught as Bucer. They also expressed their sincerity in the matter and asked to be received and acknowledged as brethren. After consulting his associates Luther said to Bucer and his friends: "Worthy friends and brethren, we have now heard the reply and confession of you all, and learn, that you believe and teach that in the Lord's Supper there are given and received the true body and the true blood of the Lord, and not merely bread and wine; that this act of giving and receiving, moreover, truly occurs and is not imaginary and feigned; your objections having reference simply to the wicked; but you confess, nevertheless, that as St. Paul teaches 'the unworthy cannot make the body of the Lord to be absent;' concerning this we will not dispute. Because, therefore, you are thus disposed, we are united, and received

you as our dear brethren in the Lord, as far as this article is concerned."

Thus a union was concluded by the two parties. All the members of this memorable conference were deeply moved and Bucer and Capito wept. All united in praising God for the good results of this meeting. On May 24, divine services were held, and Luther preached from Mark 16, 15. Myconius said of this sermon: "I, indeed, had often heard Luther preach, but at that time it really seemed to me as if he did not speak only, but thundered from heaven itself in the name of Christ." On May 25th a form of union, drawn by Melancthon, was presented to the conference. On the 28th Bucer and Capito received the holy Supper with the theologians of the other side, and thus gave testimony of their full union with Luther and his associates. On the 29th the form of union prepared by Melancthon was adopted and subscribed by all the theologians present and afterwards by many others in Germany.

By the adoption of the "Wittenberg Concord" unity of doctrine was established among the Protestants in Germany. The Swiss theologians, however, did not sign these articles, but continued to adhere to their former declarations and confessions. The Protestants of Southern Germany greatly rejoiced and even the Churches of Berne and Basel in Switzerland were at first favorably disposed to the Wittenberg Union. But the fanatical Zwinglian party in Zurich opposed it. Yet Luther was patient and continued to hope for the best, until he had no longer any reason to hope. The separa-

tion between Wittenberg and Zurich became permanent, because the great Reformer and his associates could not depart from the doctrine taught in the Word of eternal truth.

CHAPTER V.

The Convention at Smalcald and the Smalcald Articles.

A short time after the establishment of the Wittenberg Concord, namely, on the second of June 1536, Pope Paul III. announced that a general Church Council would be held at Mantua, beginning on the 23rd of May of the following year. This Council was to convene for the purpose of crushing the "Lutheran heresy," "reforming the morals of Christendom," "establishing a general peace and union among Christians," and regaining the power of dominion of the pope. Luther and his associates did not think it advisable for the Protestant estates to entirely ignore this Council. The elector requested Luther and other theologians again to take into consideration the articles of faith and to state distinctly what could be conceded to the papists and what should be maintained against them to the last. Luther himself drew up the "Smalcald Articles" in the month of January, 1537. These articles are divided into three parts: the first part treats of "articles concerning the Divine Majesty." Of this first part it is said: "With regard to these articles, there is no strife or dispute, they being received and confessed

by both sides. Wherefore it is not necessary to treat further of them at present." The second part treats of the "articles which relate to the office and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, or our salvation." The first or chief article of the second part strongly affirms our redemption through Christ by His perfect obedience in our stead and our justification by faith alone. Of this grand, glorious, fundamental doctrine, "the article of the standing or falling Church," it is said: "From this article we cannot depart or swerve, even if the heavens and the earth, and everything else, should crumble into pieces, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4, 12), and with His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53, 5.) And upon this doctrine we base all our doctrine and life, in opposition to the pope, the devil and the world. Therefore we must be fully assured of it, and not doubt; otherwise all is lost, and the pope, the devil and everything else will prevail against us." The third part treats of Articles of which Luther says: "Concerning the following points or articles we may treat with learned, sensible men, or among ourselves. The pope and his kingdom do not trouble themselves much about them. For *conscience* is a trifling matter with them. The things which they esteem are gold, honor and power." Finally there is an Appendix to the Smalcald Articles, consisting of two parts: the first treating of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, and the second of the Power and Jurisdiction of the Bishops. In the first Appendix, as well as in Article IV of Part II it is

shown that the pope does not possess dominion or power by virtue of a Divine right, command or ordinance, and that a visible head of the Church is contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. Melancthon thought, that if the pope would only permit the Gospel to be preached, his supremacy over the bishops according to human right might be granted for the sake of peace.

The Smalcald Articles are a clear concise and forcible protest of the Church of the Reformation against popery and all its awful abominations, such as the sacrifice of the mass, purgatory and the fictitious tales of souls coming out of purgatory to ask relief by the prayers of the living, pilgrimages, monastic orders, the invocation of departed saints, the idolatrous veneration of relics, indulgences for sin and similar abominations, by which man's human righteousness was substituted for the righteousness of Christ. And as the Smalcald Articles were intended to be laid before the Council "at Mantua, or at any other place," it is said at the close of the second part: "In these four articles they will have enough to condemn at the Council, for they cannot and will not accept the least member of a single one of these articles. For this we must be prepared, and console ourselves with the hope, that Christ our Lord has assailed His adversaries and will pursue them both with his Spirit and judgments. Amen. For at this Council we shall not, as at Augsburg, stand before the emperor, or temporal authority, who published a very gracious summons and caused matters to be investigated in kindness; but we shall stand be-

fore the pope and the devil himself, who does not intend to listen, but only to condemn, to murder and to force us into idolatry. Therefore we dare not here kiss his feet, or say: You are my gracious lord! but as the angel in Zechariah 3, 2, said to the devil: God rebuke thee, Satan!"

The Smalcald Articles were signed, not only by the Protestant theologians, but also by the princes and the estates belonging to the Smalcald League, and this noble testimony for the Divine truth became a confessional standard of the Church of the Reformation.

In the month of February, 1537, a meeting of the League was held at Smalcald. A large number of theologians and princes assembled there, and a representative of the emperor attended the meeting. Luther was also present, but suffered severely by sickness, so that it was thought his death was near. The elector hastened to his bedside and comforted him, saying: "Our beloved Lord and God, for the sake of His name and Word, will preserve your life, dear father." Luther expressed his thanks to the noble elector for his kindness and admonished him to earnestly and carefully guard the priceless treasure of the Gospel and the pure Christian doctrine. The elector replied: "I am afraid, dear Doctor, that if God should take you away, He will also take away His precious Word." Luther said: "Oh no, my gracious Sire, there are yet many learned and faithful men with sincere intentions and good understandings; and I hope that God will grant His grace that they may become a strong

wall of defence for the Gospel. May the Almighty God vouchsafe this!"

As Luther's health did not improve at Smalcald, he desired to be removed home. He bade his friends farewell and said at parting: "When I am dead and gone, remember this: if the pope should lay aside his crown and renounce his primacy, and if he should confess that he has erred and has plunged the Church into destruction, then receive him into our Church; but otherwise he shall always be considered by you as the Antichrist." At Gotha his condition grew worse, so that his life was despaired of, but he improved and was enabled to continue on his way home to Wittenberg, where he safely arrived March 14th, 1537.

The allied Protestant princes and estates, assembled at Smalcald, resolved not to accept the invitation of the pope to attend the proposed Council. For such a Council as the pope offered was not the kind that Protestant Germany had so long and so earnestly demanded. The Council, as the Papist desired, would have been entirely under the control and direction of the pope and nothing else but an instrument in his hands to harass and oppress the Lutherans. The latter desired a free and untrammelled Council, to be held, not in Italy, but in Germany. Charles V., being again threatened by new wars and the political condition of Germany being very complicated at this time, could not compel the Lutherans to take part in a Council for which they could not have any sympathy.

CHAPTER VI.

The Closing Years of Luther's Life.

After Luther had recovered from the severe illness, caused by strangury, which had befallen him at Smalcald during his stay at the convention held there, a rumor was circulated among the Romanists that he had died. A messenger sent to him by friends in the Valley of the Inn, in Tyrol, visited the Reformer at Wittenberg and informed him that it was commonly reported in Italy, to the great joy of the fanatical Romanists, that Luther's epitaph had been written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek characters. The messenger said to Luther: "But because I now find your reverence alive, I pray you graciously to give me a writing concerning your grave, that I may be able to comfort those pious people who have troubled themselves." Luther laughed at this singular petition and said to the man: "That is a strange request for a writing. Why I have never in my life written anything concerning my burial." Finally Luther wrote thus for the messenger: "I, Doctor Martin Luther, confess by this, my handwriting, that I do not at all agree with the devil, the pope, or any of my enemies, for they would like to be able to rejoice at my death, and I would most cordially wish them such joy, and would willingly have died at Smalcald; but God has not yet wished to confirm such joy. He will, however, confirm it before they imagine, though not for their weal, and they will one day sing, Oh, if Luther were

now alive! That is the copy from my grave, in German, Greek, Latin and Hebrew."

Bugenhagen in 1537 had gone to Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, to labor in the cause of the Reformation. Luther, who now enjoyed good health, faithfully supplied Bugenhagen's place at the chief city church of Wittenberg. During the Eastertide of 1538 Luther preached nine days in succession. The Reformer was again burdened with churchly affairs, so that he complained of not being able to enjoy the quiet of advancing years. But he seemed to become young again with increasing labors.

About this time there arose the Antinomian controversy. John Agricola, who had studied in Wittenberg under Luther and who was afterward appointed director of the school at Eisleben and preacher of St. Nicolai, for some time previous entertained erroneous views concerning the use of the Moral Law. In 1537 Agricola became bolder and went so far as to declare, "that all who had anything to do with Moses would go to the devil, for Moses ought to be hanged." He said, "that the Law should be banished from the church to the council house, and that the people were to be enticed to true repentance and a knowledge of their sins, wholly through the preaching of Christ crucified." It appears that Agricola must have forgotten, that by the law is the knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3, 20). He said many absurd and blasphemous things, such as: "The Law does not deserve to be called the Word of God." "All that deal with Moses must perish. To the gibbet with Moses!"

In a series of six disputations or lectures Luther successfully refuted the errors of Agricola and showed the people the right use of the Moral Law. In 1540 Agricola went to Berlin where he became court-preacher, and later Superintendent of the Mark Brandenburg. It appears that Agricola finally revoked his errors and asked Luther's pardon, but it is said that the latter, although forgiving him, never rightly trusted him again.

It is not possible to give even a brief account of all the labors of the great Reformer within the limits of this little work. We are justly astonished at his many and diverse labors and at his capacity for such labors. Not only could he speak and write in a masterly manner on all theological subjects, but he could also handle the various civil and secular questions of the day equally well. His home-life, surrounded by his family and friends, was a truly Christian life, adorned with all the virtues that make home a paradise below. Well does Carlyle say of Luther: "I will call this Luther a true, great man, great in intellect, in courage, affection, and integrity, one of our most lovable and precious men. Great not as a hewn obelisk, but as an Alpine mountain, so simple, honest, spontaneous, not setting up to be great at all; there fore quite another purpose than being great! Ah, yes, unsubduable granite, piercing far and wide into the heavens; yet in the clefts of it, fountains, green, beautiful valleys with flowers! A right spiritual Hero and Prophet; once more a true son of Nature and Fact, for whom these centuries

and many that are to come yet will be thankful to heaven."

At the city of Nuremberg a league of Romanist princes had been formed. At the head of this league were the Dukes Louis of Bavaria and Henry of Brunswick. The latter, a very fanatical enemy of the Protestants, strenuously urged war against them. At this time it was rumored through Germany, that as soon as the imperial armies had defeated the Turks they would turn against the Protestants. Luther, who had been questioned on this matter, answered that the Elector of Saxony, in case of necessity, could and should defend his country against the Romanists, for as a prince and ruler he was bound to protect his subjects. But to attack the Romanists by force of arms, before it could be seen that their intentions were manifestly hostile, the Reformer did not consider advisable, but contrary to God's Word, which says: "For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matt. 26, 52). Luther did not oppose resistance to the emperor, if the latter with his army should attack the elector; for in such a war the former would no longer be the Emperor of Germany, but a hireling of the pope.

About this time Luther issued his treatise "concerning the Councils and the Church." He defines the Church to be "a communion of saints, that is, a collection or assembly of persons who are Christians and are holy," the aggregate of all true believers in all times and at all places.

In the year 1539 Duke George of Saxony, the implacable enemy of Luther and of the Reforma-

tion, died and the hostile projects of the Romanist princes were for a short time at least, brought to naught. The fanatical Duke George had severely persecuted his subjects for their faithful adherence to the cause of the Reformation and had even unjustly oppressed his brother, Duke Henry at Freiberg. When Luther heard of this he said: "God will turn the tables and cause him that is rich in heirs to wither, and him that is withered to flourish through His blessing." These words of the Reformer were prophetic. John, the elder son of Duke George, once sent word to Luther by the celebrated painter Lucas Kranach, saying, "that if after the death of his (John's) father, the reins of government should come into his hand, he (Luther) should find in him a severer enemy; that if his father had been iron to Luther, he would be steel to him." The Reformer calmly smiled when Kranach brought him the message and replied: "That Duke John should only see to it how he might die a happy death, and that he did not dread his menaces, as he well knew that Duke John would not live to see his father's death." It is said that when Kranach returned to Duke John and brought him Luther's answer, he became very despondent. He died January 21, 1537, and his brother, Duke Frederick, the second son of Duke George, died February 26, 1539. Both princes died before their father and left no heirs. Duke George now made his brother Henry, with his sons, his successors, and sent ambassadors to his brother to prevail upon him to abstain from introducing the Reformation into his new dominions after Duke George's death.

But before the ambassadors returned with the answer of Duke Henry, George had died very unexpectedly, April 17th, 1539, and his lands and possessions were inherited by his brother, who now introduced the Reformation into the whole dukedom of Saxony.

Duke Henry was solemnly inducted into the Electorate at Leipzig. Luther was present on this occasion and on Whitsuntide eve preached in the court-chapel of the Pleissenburg on the Gospel for Whitsuntide, John 14, 23-31. He also preached in the Church of St. Nicholas. German hymns composed by the Reformer were sung before and after the sermon, and all the prayers were offered in the German language. The throng of people both inside and outside the Church, was immense.

As the Reformation continued to spread throughout Germany and to gain fresh victories everywhere, and as the empire was again menaced by the arch-enemies of Christendom, the Turks, the emperor thought it not expedient to acknowledge and ratify at the Diet of Regensburg (1541) the Nuremberg compact of religious peace. Luther did not expect any great results to follow from political negotiations and compacts. He generally considered them temporary expedients—sewing new clothes upon old garments to mend old rents.

In the year 1539 there appeared for the first time the first part of the German writings of Luther, edited by his friend, Dr. Caspar Cruciger. In the same year he and other learned theologians began anew to revise the German Bible. Having completed this revision the Reformer said, "I do not

expect to live long enough to revise the Bible another time. And even if I should be required to live so long, I am nevertheless too weak for such a labor."

In the year 1539 the cause of the Reformation was introduced into Mark Brandenburg by the Elector Joachim II., who had received the true doctrine. Thus the Reformation continued to spread through Germany and the truth gained one victory after the other.

The papal party appeared to be willing to negotiate with the Protestants with a view to bring about a settlement of existing difficulties. Conventions were held at Smalcald, Hagenau and Worms in the year 1541, but there was little accomplished at these meetings. In the same year there was an Imperial Diet held in the city of Regensburg and at the same time and place a colloquium between Protestants and Roman Catholic theologians was also held. Although a formula of agreement (the Regensburg Interim), was adopted, and mutual toleration enjoined, a union of the two parties was now out of question. The formula of Regensburg was vague and indefinite and could not effect a true union. Luther said: "Our cause is not directed by chance, but according to a certain counsel, and that not our own, be it ever so good, but wholly according to God's counsel. The Word runs, prayer blazes forth, hope endures, faith overcomes, so that we can see and feel it; and if we were not flesh, we might sleep and rest, bearing in mind the Word in Moses (Exod. 14, 14): 'The

Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.' ”

June 9th, 1541, several distinguished ambassadors came to Luther, with the knowledge and consent of the emperor, to prevail upon the Reformer to consent to or to tolerate several distinctive doctrines of the Church of Rome. Although Luther was desirous that true union and peace might prevail, he could not give up a single doctrine of God's Word, and especially could he not surrender the doctrine of justification by faith, which article was very obscurely and vaguely, yea, falsely stated in the formula of Regensburg. Luther was immovable when "the article of the standing or falling Church" was in peril.

In the year 1544 an Imperial Diet was held in the city of Speier. The emperor was now disposed to be very gracious toward the Protestants. Melancthon was ordered to submit a plan of reformation to a Diet to be held the following year in Worms. This document was signed by Luther. The pope was very angry with the emperor for his moderation and concessions to the Protestants. About this time Luther wrote his very severe and caustic treatise: "Against the Papacy at Rome, instituted by the devil." In this little book Luther calls the Pope "the most infernal father," and pours out his righteous wrath and indignation against the Antichrist.

Pope Paul III. summoned a Church Council to meet at Trent, a city in the southern part of the Italian Tyrol. The council began its sessions December 13th, 1545, but the Protestants took no

part in it. The Reformation meanwhile continued to conquer new territory in Germany. The city of Halle and the Duchy of Brunswick were gained for the Reformation. Even the Archbishop of Cologne and the Bishop of Muenster introduced reformatory measures into their respective territories.

In the closing years of his life Luther wrote a number of important treatises, such as his "Shorter Confession concerning the Sacraments, against the fanatics," and "in opposition to the thirty-two Articles of the Louvain theologians." The latter were very zealous and fanatical partisans of the pope, and the Reformer handled them very severely.

As we approach the end of Luther's grand career, we observe the affliction which befell this great man in the death of his dearly beloved daughter, Magdalena, who died in 1542, aged about thirteen years. He said: "I am indeed joyful in the spirit but after the flesh am very sad." To friends who condoled with him in this affliction he said: "You should rejoice; I have sent a saint to heaven, yea, a living saint." Another daughter, Elizabeth, had died in early infancy in the year 1528. Three sons, John, Martin and Paul, and one daughter, Margaret, lived to mature years.

Luther had now reached his sixty-third year. And yet, although old and infirm and weary with many labors, he visited Mansfeld upon invitation in October, 1545, to arbitrate in a dispute between the Counts of Mansfeld about certain privileges, rights and revenues. His first attempt to reconcile the parties was fruitless and he repeated his visit

at Christmas of the same year. The second attempt to bring about a reconciliation was also unsuccessful. In January, 1546, he went for a third time to Eisleben, the place of his birth, to restore peace between the two parties. Having contracted a severe cold whilst on the way he was taken sick at Eisleben. During his sickness he frequently prayed: "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Thou hast redeemed me, Lord, Thou God of truth." On the 18th of February, 1546, his end on earth approached. He comforted himself and his sorrowing friends by repeating consolatory passages of God's Word. As he quietly lay on his bed of death, Dr. Jonas and Magister Coelius asked him: "Reverend father, do you die in firm adherence to Christ and the doctrines you have preached?" The grand Reformer, the man of God, the hero in the cause of the Lord, answered clearly and distinctly, so that all present could hear him: "Yes!" Soon after this last confession for Christ and His Word, Martin Luther sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, in the hope of a glorious resurrection and an eternal life of heavenly glory. The faithful laborer entered into his rest.

The mortal remains of Martin Luther were lowered into a vault in the old Castle church at Wittenberg, near the pulpit, from which the great preacher had so often proclaimed the Gospel of Christ to the large and attentive congregations assembled to hear him.

A year after Luther's death the great Emperor, Charles V., stood at the grave of the sainted Reformer. The monarch had entered into Witten-

berg after having obtained the victory over the allied forces of the Smalcald League at the battle of Muehlheim (April 24, 1547). The cruel and fanatical Papist, Fernando Alvarez, Duke of Alva, the most bloody-minded of the persecutors of that time, urged the victorious monarch to burn the remains of the great "heretic" and scatter the ashes to the winds. But Charles V., nobler than his inhuman adviser, replied: "My work with Luther is done; he has now another Judge whose domain I may not invade. I war with the living, and not with the dead."

CHAPTER VII.

History of the Reformation From the Death of Luther to the Peace of Augsburg.

During the sessions of the Diet at Regensburg (1547), the emperor manifested greater hostility toward the Protestants than ever before. The latter asked him on the 16th of June why he so earnestly engaged in warlike preparations. The emperor declared that he was disposed to preserve peace and amity in the empire and to show favor to all who would obey him, but that he would proceed with severity against all refractory persons as the occasion might demand. The next day he issued a rescript, addressed to several imperial cities, saying that he was about to bring a number of violators of the public peace to a sense of their duty as subjects of the government and to punish several princes who had hitherto despised his im-

perial authority under the guise of religion. These declarations of the emperor were intended to deceive the Protestants and to cause divisions in their ranks. But the actions of the pope soon opened the eyes of the Evangelical party, for he publicly announced to the world that he, together with the emperor, had formed an alliance against the Lutheran heretics, and offered to all who would further this "holy crusade" by prayers and contributions a full and complete indulgence for their sins. The papal announcement inflamed the enthusiasm of the Protestant estates. The Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, in a writing to the emperor, vindicated themselves against the charge of disobedience toward the government, and declared that the emperor abused his authority by threatening Germany with war, having been instigated thereto by the pope, who desired to exterminate all who confessed the pure doctrines of God's Word. July 20th, 1546, both princes were formally outlawed by the emperor, but large numbers of soldiers flocked to the standards, and in a short time the Protestant princes had about them a considerable army, ready for fighting, before the emperor had completed his preparations for war.

Unfortunately for the Protestant cause, irresolution and even discord prevailed in the Councils of the Smalcald League. The leaders failed to avail themselves of the opportunity to achieve a victory in Northern Germany. Meanwhile the young Duke Maurice of Saxony, a Protestant by confession, but allied for political reasons with the emperor, took forcible possession of the lands of his cousin, the

Elector John Frederick. The latter, hearing of Duke Maurice's intentions, hastened at once to his dominions and regained them. The emperor with his army quickly followed the elector and his troops, and defeated them at the battle of Muehlberg on the Elbe, April 24, 1547. The noble elector after bravely defending himself, was taken prisoner and on the 19th of May resigned for himself and for his posterity the Electorate of Saxony, giving up all his lands, except a few small domains, into the hands of the emperor.

The elector, who was now a prisoner of war at the mercy of his imperial conqueror, remained firm and steadfast in his confession of the true doctrine. He was condemned to death, but the other German princes solemnly protested against the sentence and his life was spared. His Saxon territories were given to his cousin Maurice, and the elector went to prison, where he spent five years. This noble prince is well styled John Frederick the Magnanimous. His wife was a true heroine. When the imperial army approached Wittenberg she assumed command of the city, determined to defend her husband's capital to the last, but was finally compelled to surrender to overpowering numbers.

John Frederick having been vanquished by the emperor, his ally, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, was not able to resist the victorious imperial army. By the intervention of his son-in-law, the new elector, Maurice of Saxony, the landgrave surrendered to the emperor at Halle, June 19th, 1547. He sought a reconciliation with the emperor, and expressed his willingness to make heavy sacrifices

to gain the imperial favor. The emperor demanded the demolition of all the Hessian fortresses except Cassel, a tribute of 150,000 florins of gold, and a petition for pardon to be sought by the landgrave on his knees before the emperor. Philip consented to all these demands. But when he came to ask the emperor's pardon he was so struck with the ridiculous ceremony of falling on his knees that he smiled. The emperor seeing this fell into a great passion and said: "I will teach you to laugh." He immediately ordered that the landgrave be cast into prison and years elapsed before the unfortunate prince was released.

The victorious Charles V., having vanquished the two principal Protestant princes, was now desirous of enforcing his plans with reference to religious matters and putting an end to the progress of the Reformation. At the Diet of Augsburg, which was opened September 1, 1547, he tried to prevail upon the Protestants to take part in the Church Council, promising safety to their delegates for their persons. But the Evangelical party could not think of sending delegates to a Council which had already condemned the true scriptural doctrines taught by the great Reformer.

The emperor who, it appears, was not quite as zealous as the pope in putting down the heretics, issued in the year 1548 a decree, known as the Augsburg Interim, for the purpose of establishing religious peace and union between Protestants and Papists. This new compromise, which was intended to be in force until a decision had been reached by the general Church Council, blended and fused in

unnatural union truth and error even more than the former Interim of Regensburg. Upon the whole the new Interim was much more favorable to the Papists than to the Protestants. The majority of the latter rejected this new compromise, whilst many others received it very unwillingly. For a considerable number of years the work of trying to bring truth and error under one yoke went on in German.

Finally the new Interim was rejected by the Papists, as well as by the Protestants. The former regarded it as infamous to make any concessions to the hated and despised Lutheran heretics, and the latter could not and would not sacrifice the truth for the sake of temporal peace.

Charles V. was anxious that after his death his crown should descend to his son Philip. About 20 years before, his brother Ferdinand had been chosen king of Germany. It was generally supposed that this election of Ferdinand indicated his succession to the imperial crown, after the death of Charles. But before the question of succession could be decided by a Diet, some very startling news came from Magdeburg, against which Prince Maurice of Saxony had led the imperial army. The Protestant leaders within the walls of Magdeburg had prepared for a vigorous defense. The city was well provisioned and garrisoned for a long siege. The demand of Maurice that it be surrendered was answered with scorn. Neither threats nor persuasions availed anything; the besieged contemptuously called Maurice a traitor to the Protestant cause.

It is probable that these reproaches had considerable effect upon Prince Maurice and that he deeply felt the baseness of his attitude toward the Protestants. Moreover, he had reason to be offended at the emperor for sending Philip of Hesse, the father-in-law of Maurice, to prison for smiling when forced to ask the emperor's pardon. Maurice now conceived the design of going back to the Protestant cause and turning his forces against the emperor. He entered into a treaty with Henry II., king of France, to whom he promised the province of Lorraine with the cities of Toul, Verdun, and Metz, on condition that Henry should assist him against Charles. In the spring of 1552 Maurice marched against the emperor, who then held court at Innsbruck in Tyrol. The emperor, completely surprised, fled over the Alps in a dreadful storm. The Romanists were greatly terrified, and the Council of Trent broke up and fled in wild disorder. John Frederick of Saxony and Philip of Hesse were set free. Protestantism suddenly arose like a giant awakening from his slumbers, whilst the papacy trembled like a guilty culprit expecting his judgment. Ferdinand, king of Germany, now entered into an alliance with Duke Maurice of Saxony. A German Diet was held at Passau and a treaty of peace concluded between the Protestants and the Papists. The Augsburg Confession of Faith was formally acknowledged to be the symbolic standard of the Lutherans and the free exercise of their religion was solemnly guaranteed to them in this treaty.

Charles V. in his Spanish dominions organized an army and attempted to regain his former ascendancy. In the winter of 1552 he laid siege to Metz. But the plague broke out in his camp, the siege was abandoned, and hostilities were transferred to other parts of the empire. For a while the struggle against the Protestants was carried on in a desultory manner, especially by Albert of Brandenburg, who made his way into Saxony and Franconia with fire and sword. But his mad career was suddenly checked by Maurice of Saxony, who completely defeated him at the battle of Sivershausen. This victory, however, caused Maurice to lose his life; he received a mortal wound, from which he died two days after the battle.

The emperor, discouraged and broken-hearted, now gave up the last small remnant of hope of regaining his lost power. In the mean time the Popes Julius and Marcellinus looked on from the "eternal city" on the Tiber, with feelings of mortal dread and horror, mixed with hate and anger. In September, 1555, a Diet was held at Augsburg and a religious peace was concluded, which granted freedom of worship and equality of rights to the adherents of the Augsburg Confession and gave them all the privileges enjoyed by their Roman Catholic fellow-citizens.

Charles V., disappointed in his ambitious schemes, abdicated his office as Emperor of Germany just one month after the conclusion of the Peace of Augsburg. To his son Philip he conferred the kingdom of the Netherlands and the crowns of Spain, Naples and the Indies. He then

sought refuge from the memories of his ambitious plans and vanished hopes in the lonely monastery of San Yuste in Spain, where he passed the remaining years of his life as a kind of monk, engaging in the common devotions and labors and submitting to flagellation. He died in the year 1558.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Council of Trent.

Our history of the Reformation, beginning with the first publication of the Ninety-five Theses by Martin Luther and ending with the conclusion of the Roman Catholic Council of Trent, comprises a period of but forty-six years. Yet how many important events occurred in this comparatively short period of time? Martin Luther, "the solitary monk that shook the world," had defied the powerful authority of the Romish Antichrist and declared war against him. He had overthrown and removed the huge mass of papal errors, falsehoods and superstitions which had been accumulating for ages. He had proclaimed by tongue and pen to Christendom the pure doctrines of God's Word, and by teaching the grand, glorious, fundamental doctrine of justification by faith, "the article of the standing or falling Church." He had given to the German nation the Word of God in the language of the country. He had successfully repelled every attack of the Romanists, the sectarians and the fanatics, against the pure doctrines of God's Word. He had established the principle, that the Bible

alone is the only infallible source and rule and standard of faith and practice. And he had proclaimed the universal priesthood of believers, and rightly showed their privileges and blessings as members of that mystical body of which Christ is the Head.

The Reformation of the Church was now an accomplished fact and the pure scriptural doctrines continued to spread, not only through the German Empire, but also to the other European countries. The pope, seeing this, made an attempt to regain his lost power by means of the Council of Trent. The chief business of this assembly was the condemnation of the Reformation effected by Martin Luther. The council was held with various interruptions from December 13, 1545, to December 4, 1563. From the stand-point of doctrine and discipline this Council was the most important in the history of the Church of Rome, as it unalterably fixed the attitude of Rome to the Reformation, and determined for all future time the relation of the papacy to the teachings of the Word of God. This noted assembly produced the most important confessional standards on faith and practice in the Church of Rome in opposition to the Church of the Reformation.

The Council of Trent was convened as an exclusively papistical assembly by order of Pope Paul III., at Trent, a free imperial city in the southern part of Tyrol, on the 13th of December, 1545. In March, 1547, it was transferred to Bologna from fear of the plague. On the 17th of September, 1549, it was indefinitely adjourned, and re-

opened at Trent May 1, 1551, by order of Pope Julius III. It was broken up by the sudden and unexpected victory of the new Elector of Saxony, Maurice, over the emperor April 28, 1552, and was re-called for the last time by Pope Pius IV., on the 28th of January, 1562. It finally adjourned December 4, 1563. This remarkable assembly, the most noted in the Church of Rome, closed its sessions with "Anathema to all heretics, anathema, anathema."

The object of this Council was two-fold: the first to condemn the doctrines and principles of Luther and to define and declare the doctrines and principles of the Church of Rome as represented by its head, the pope. The second ostensible purpose was to bring about a reformation of discipline in the Church.

The Emperor Charles V. intended that this Council should be a free and general assembly, in which the Lutherans should have a fair and impartial hearing. Melancthon and Brentius, together with some other Lutheran theologians, started in 1552 on a journey to Trent, but their mission proved a failure, inasmuch as they were refused a deliberate voice in the Council.

The Council abolished a few of the most shameful and notorious abuses in the Church of Rome, and recommended some disciplinary reforms with regard to the morals and education of the clergy and the monks and nuns. And thus the Reformation produced a good effect even upon the Roman Catholic Church, as this is admitted by some of the best historians of that Church. But as far

as religious doctrines and principles were concerned, there was no sign of a reformation at Trent. It is true that a few vague and uncertain sentiments were uttered at the Council in favor of the supreme authority of the Holy Scriptures as the rule of faith and life, and in favor of the doctrine of justification by faith, but these sentiments did not prevail. Not the least concession was made to the Lutherans.

The decisions of the Council contain positive statements of the Roman Catholic dogmas and also short denunciations or condemnations of the Lutheran doctrine. The positive statements of Romish doctrines are generally expressed with considerable clearness and precision, but the condemnatory articles directed against the Lutherans are full of exaggerations and even misrepresentations, mixed up with denunciations of heresies, which Lutherans condemn as well as the Roman Catholics. The principles of the Reformation are placed in the most unfavorable light in the decrees and canons of the Council, and the Lutherans are made to appear as the vilest and most abominable heretics.

The following doctrines, contrary to the principles of the Reformation, were declared to be the principles of the Church of Rome: The traditions of the Church, together with the holy Scriptures (the Apocrypha included), are the joint rules of faith and life; a progressive justification, by faith *and* good works, is taught in opposition to the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith alone; the figment of transubstantiation is established as an

article of faith, and the cup is withheld from the laity; the celebration of the popish mass is declared to be a sacrifice of Christ's body; confirmation, matrimony, penance, ordination and extreme unction are declared to be sacraments; the doctrines concerning purgatory, invocation of the saints and sacred images, fasts, feasts and the like, are established by the Council.

The acts and decisions of this great ecclesiastical assembly were acknowledged and received in Italy, Portugal, Spain, France, the Netherlands, Poland and the Roman Catholic parts of Germany, but with certain reservations of the kingly power. In France these acts and decisions were never formally published and only the positive doctrinal parts were publicly recognized. But the acts of the Council, its canons and decrees, were not introduced into England.

As already stated, the great business of the Council of Trent was the public and formal condemnation of the doctrines of the Reformation. The renowned Lutheran theologian, Martin Chemnitz, (born 1522, died 1586), wrote a refutation of the acts of the Council (*Examen Concilii Tridentini*), in four volumes. This classical work of the great Chemnitz has never been surpassed.

The Council of Trent fixed and determined for all time to come the doctrinal and practical status of the Church of Rome and manifested its abiding hostility toward the Reformation of the sixteenth century. It showed to the world that the papacy cannot be reformed. After this Council no general assembly of the Roman Catholic Church has been

held until the Council of the Vatican in 1869-70, in which Rome declared to an astonished world the blasphemous dogma of the infallibility of the pope, thus making him clearly manifest as "that man of sin," "the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. 2, 3. 4.

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And here, having come down to that period of time when the Church of Rome declared undying hostility toward the pure doctrines of the Word of God and to all confessing these doctrines, I will close the History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. It is not necessary that I should say anything about the inestimable blessings of this great religious movement, because these blessings are manifest to all reflecting persons. Yea, what might be the condition of Christendom today had there not been a Reformation! Well does the historian J. A. Froude say: "Had there been no Luther, the English, American and German peoples would be thinking differently, would be acting differently, would be altogether different men and women from what they are at this moment."

APPENDIX.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

- 1483. November 10. Martin Luther is born at Eisleben.
- 1497. Luther attends the school at Magdeburg.
- 1498. Is sent to school at Eisenach.
- 1501. Enters the University at Erfurt.
- 1503. Receives the degree of Bachelor of Arts.
- 1505. Receives the degree of Master of Arts.
- 1505. Enters the Augustinian cloister at Erfurt.
- 1507. May 2. Luther is ordained a priest.
- 1508. Appointed Professor of Philosophy in Wittenberg University.
- 1509. March 9. Becomes Bachelor of Theology.
- 1511. Visits Rome on business for the Augustinians.
- 1512. October 12. Luther made Doctor of Theology.
- 1516. He attacks the Scholastic Theology.
- 1517. October 31. Attaches his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church.
- 1518. April 26. Luther publicly disputes at Heidelberg.
- 1518. August 7. Summoned to appear at Rome.
- 1518. October 7-20. Luther at Augsburg and before Cajetan.
- 1519. January. He confers with Miltitz at Altenburg.
- 1519. July 4-16. Disputes with Eck at Leipzig.
- 1520. Luther publishes: "To the Christian Nobility of the German Empire," "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," and "The Liberty of the Christian."
- 1520. December 10. Luther burns the Papal Bull.
- 1521. April 17, 18. Appears at the Diet of Worms.
- 1521. May 4. Luther brought to the Wartburg.
- 1521. May 8. Charles V. issues an edict against Luther.
- 1521. May. Begins the translation of the Bible.

1522. September 21. The New Testament published in German.
1522. Luther visits Wittenberg and preaches against Karlstadt.
1522. March 7. Returns to Wittenberg and restores order.
1524. Luther publishes a German Hymn Book.
1524. He preaches against the fanatical "New Prophets."
1525. June 13. Luther marries Catharine von Bora.
1528. He inspects the Churches of Wittenberg and vicinity.
1529. Luther prepares and publishes his two Catechisms.
1529. October 1-4. The Conference at Marburg.
1530. April-October. Luther at Coburg during the Diet of Augsburg.
1534. Luther publishes the entire Bible in German.
1535. October. Luther's interview with Vergerius.
1536. May 29. The Wittenberg Concord subscribed.
1537. February. Luther in Smalcald. The Smalcald Articles.
1538. Luther disputes with Agricola on the Use of the Law.
1540. He revises the Translation of the Bible.
1544. Luther publishes his Confession concerning the Lord's Supper.
1545. He publishes his treatise: "The Papacy at Rome instituted by the Devil."
1545. Luther goes the second time, on Christmas day, to Mansfeld to arbitrate between the Counts of Mansfeld.
1546. Luther repeats his visit to Mansfeld.
1546. January 17. He preaches for the last time in Wittenberg.
1546. January 28. Arrives in Eisleben.
1546. February 16. He establishes peace between the Counts of Mansfeld.
1546. February 18. Martin Luther dies in Eisleben.
1546. February 22. He is buried in the Castle Church at Wittenberg.