A Life of Martin Luther

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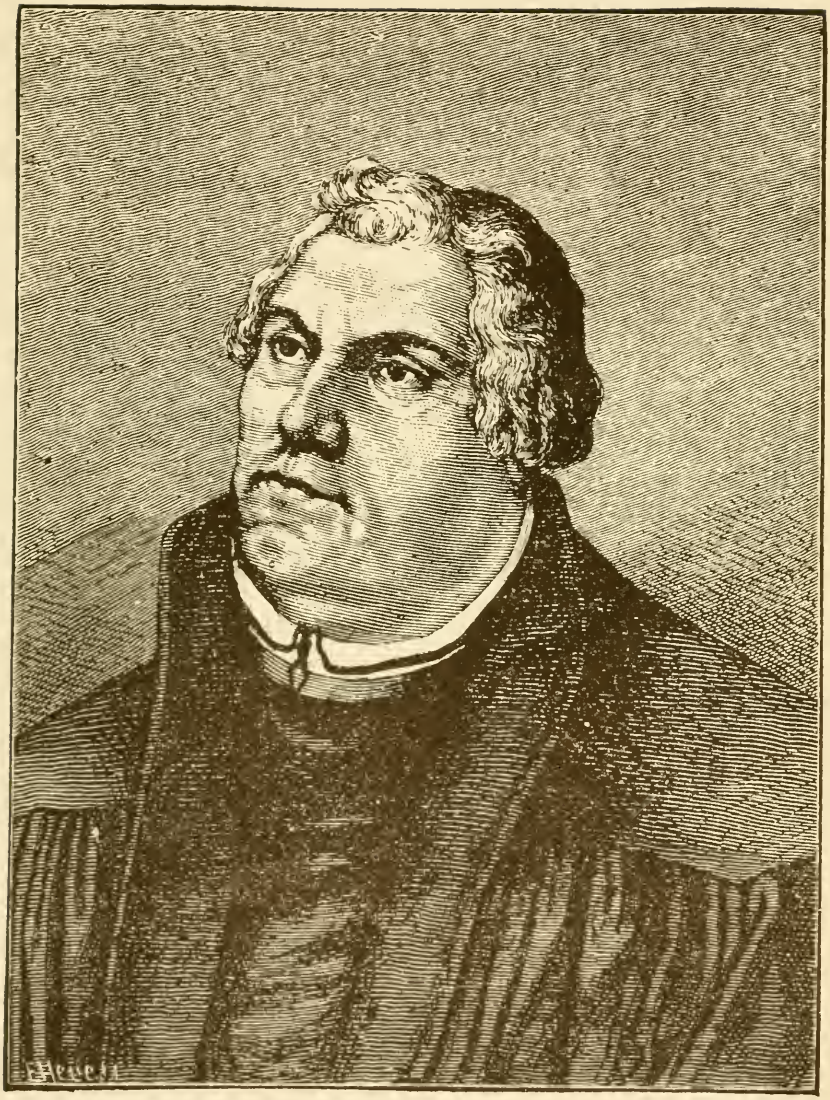
A life of Martin Luther, the
great reformer of the

A LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER



MARTIN LUTHER

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A LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER

THE GREAT REFORMER OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

BY

LOVICK PIERCE WINTER

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DEDICATION

To the Memory of My Father

JOHN CHRISTOPHER WINTER

Who was a native of Germany, and was christened and confirmed in the Lutheran Church; who was always loyal to the Fatherland and to the communion of his fathers; who was equally loyal to the land and Church of his later adoption; and whose sturdy integrity and fidelity have been an inspiration to me through all the forty years since he died, this Life of Martin Luther is reverently dedicated.

July 30th, 1910.

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A LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER.

CHAPTER I.

Luther's Parentage and Boyhood.

Saxony is one of the most important of the German States. Lying between Prussia and Austria, for many centuries the rivals for German supremacy, its location has made it the battle ground in many wars and the burial ground of many brave sokliers. It is a land of hills and forests, of cities and mines, of agriculture and education, of famous universities and noted manufactures. In the centuries-long history of Germany, its people have played an important part in the romantic annals of an always interesting race.

"Marry your neighbor's daughter," says an old German proverb; and so at Mohra, a little village in the very heart of Saxony, in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, Hans Luder, a peasant, married a neighboring girl, Margaret Ziegler. These were the parents of Martin Luther, the great reformer.

Mohra was a small, insignificant village, without even a church, the people worshiping in a sort of chapel-of-ease affiliated with a neighboring parish. The neighbors of the newly married couple were poor, but strong and hardy, ready at any time for a fisticuff or a foot race. The soil, too, was poor, much of it being moorland, and farming was not remunerative. Besides farming, mining was one of the occupations

of the people of Mohra, and these two strenuous pursuits bred a race full of manly, muscular strength, the people to whom in every land the Church and the State must look for preachers and statesmen and soldiers.

Hans Luder, or John Luther (Hans and John being different derivatives of the German Johann, the spelling in that language of the name John) belonged, as his distinguished son was proud to say, to a peasant family. But some time in the past the family must have had a better standing, for there was an ancestral coat of arms. This was a crossbow, with a rose on each side, a device which seems altogether appropriate for Martin Luther. The name Luther was not originally a surname but a given name, and, according to Kostlin, is identical with Lothar—"one distinguished in war." One poetically disposed might easily find an appropriateness in the name when borne by Martin Luther.

The name does not appear in the present spelling until Martin began to distinguish himself and the family name by his work as a reformer. Possibly it was an effort to give the name something of the Latin spelling, a bit of amusing pedantry quite common in those days. Sometimes, as Greek was now coming into vogue, men of learning turned their surnames into that language instead of into Latin. For instance, the original name of Melanchthon, Luther's fellow-laborer in the Reformation, was Swarzerd ("black earth"), and the bearer of the name, perhaps because he did not like its sound or suggestions, changed it into a

combination of two Greek words which meant the same as the original German name, but had a more agreeable sound and one that was more classic and scholarly.

Round about Mohra as late as the eighties of the last century there were several families who bore the name Luther, and one who was familiar with them states that they bore a strong family resemblance to their illustrious kinsman of the sixteenth century.

The name of Martin Luther's mother has been given by all the authorities as Margaret Lindemann. But Julius Kostlin, who has already been referred to, and to whom all biographers of Luther must hereafter acknowledge their indebtedness, says that this was the name of Luther's grandmother, and not of his mother, and that Luther's mother was Margaret Ziegler.

Some months after their marriage John Luther and his young wife changed their home from Mohra to Eisleben. The enemies of Luther, ready always to accept every slander put into circulation about himself and his family and to supply all that they did not find ready at their hand, have asserted that the reason for moving to Eisleben was that John Luther had killed a neighbor and fled to the latter place for safety. This story is so absurd on its face that it is manifest nothing but the malignant hatred of Luther's foes could have given it any sort of currency, even in the times of the Reformation. In fact, the story seems to have had larger circulation and credence in recent times than it had in the days of John Luther. If the elder Luther had been a fugitive from justice, as this account as-

serts, he would hardly have fled only a few miles and then taken up his home within the jurisdiction of the same ruler, who was the elector of Saxony.

John Luther was a miner by occupation. Copper was beginning to be mined in the country round about Eisleben, and he went thither, and later still to Mansfeld, that he might find more work in his chosen calling. He prospered in the course of time, and controlled two furnaces.

While the two young people were resident at Eisleben, Frau Luther gave birth to her first-born child. This babe was the infant who, in the course of time and in the providence of God, led the forces in the great Reformation which in a few years was to change the history of all Europe and the world. The date of this important advent and event was November 10, 1483.

If Sixtus IV., whose shameful and shameless reign as pope came to its ignominious close the next year, had but known the epochal event, that ecclesiastical seeker of a worldly kingdom would have left off his effort to crush the Medici and to set his nephew up in a principality, and delayed his treacherous murder of a man he had taken prisoner long enough to have repeated Herod's slaughter of the innocents, in order to rid the papacy of a man who was destined to wrest much of its ill-gotten power from its rapacious hands. But Sixtus had no wise men to tell of the star in the east, nor did he know what manner of child this infant son of a German peasant might be.

The good mother was always certain as to the hour (which was between eleven and twelve o'clock at

night) and the day and the month, but was not so sure about the year.

The next day after the young child opened his eyes upon the earth which he was to help to reconquer for his Master, he was taken by his devout and grateful father to the church and baptized. As the day was St. Martin's eve, the boy was christened Martin.

The house where Martin Luther was born was partly destroyed by fire many years ago, but some of the old structure is still standing, and is shown with much pride to travelers. And various localities here and elsewhere, identified with the history of Luther, have been marked by appropriate monuments. It was a singular coincidence that Luther should die in the very town where he was born.

It has been previously stated that John Luther prospered in business, a fact which illustrates the industry and enterprise of the father of the great reformer. But it must not be supposed that this prosperity came at once. At first there was deep poverty. And the family increased after the patriarchal manner of the old German stock. There were at least seven children in all; and to maintain these and keep the oldest son in school made the home of John and Margaret Luther anything but the abode of luxury and ease. German women of the middle and lower classes have always been accustomed to some forms of labor that in some other lands have been regarded as too arduous, if not too menial, for females. Many a good German housewife has helped her husband in the field, assisting him in saving the flax or hay or grain and in tend-

ing the cattle, and felt no incongruity between her task and her sex. This outdoor life in their early years no doubt accounts in no small degree for the notable freshness and vitality of German women. The kitchen, the cow stall, and the hay field may not afford as fine culture as the parlor, the seminary, and the social gathering, but they fit women for wifehood, motherhood, and womanhood in at least the physical strength which they impart. Male Germans have often gone very far afield in their learning and philosophy, but the average German woman has been faithful to the standard of Naomi and Ruth.

Martin Luther tells us that his mother performed much hard work in the home; that she often brought fire wood on her shoulders and did many such like tasks. But we may be sure that the worthy John was not idle all this while. Tending furnaces is very exacting work, and John Luther ate no idle bread and slept no needless slumber. Martin in after years honored his father with the reverence of a true son, and did not forget to record the fact that the means necessary to keep him in school were earned by his father "by the sweat of his brow."

John Luther was a man of decided character and most independent convictions. Two or three authentic incidents will illustrate this. Once, when very sick and apparently near death, an attending priest suggested that the sick man ought before he died to make a donation to the Church. "My family need my property worse than the Church does, and I shall leave it to them," said the strong-headed sick man.

As the Roman Catholic Church was receiving revenues from more than half the land in Germany at this time, this announcement from the elder Luther indicated no lack of liberality to the Church.

When Martin Luther decided to enter a monastery, and when he endeavored to satisfy the father that he had a call from God to this life, the father said: "Pray God that it may not be a delusion of the devil rather than a call from God."

And discussing this same matter with some of the high dignitaries of the Church, he did not hesitate to tell them that they had encouraged his son to violate the fifth commandment. The practical, hard-handed, hard-headed old German had little patience with a religion which taught that men must shut themselves up from their fellow-men and from the ordinary and needful employments of life in order to be the accepted servants of the Lord. Possibly John Luther did not reason it all out at once, but there is good cause for believing that this honest-hearted, hard-working man protested against the other-worldliness which prayed and fasted and flagellated itself, or, despairing of whipping religion into the soul through the body or fasting the depravity out of the heart, betook itself to the easy enjoyment of the fruits of other men's toil or, mayhap, to the grosser forms of carnal enjoyment.

But John Luther was a really religious man. He prayed by the bedside of his children, gave them moral instruction, and exercised a fatherly authority over them. He believed as firmly in the rod as did King

Solomon, and one might be disposed to think from the results that he put that faith into practice more wisely and seasonably than did the father of Rehoboam. Possibly in no Christian land is the authority of the father so fully recognized as in Germany. To other peoples the native land is the "mother country," to the German it is the "fatherland." And these old Teutons have been great home makers and home lovers. In their native land, and in the many lands into which they have wandered, they have shown this racial and national trait, which has made Germany what it is and Germans the best of citizens in all the countries where they have found a home.

So stern was John Luther in his family government that his son Martin spoke of it depreciatingly in his after life. "Parents should control their children," he said, "but they should love them also."

It is easy to imagine that this hard-handed old German might not always be soft-handed in controlling his household. Whatever Martin Luther may have thought of the severity of the paternal discipline, he never doubted his father's love; and he had no reason to doubt it. The interest John Luther took in the education of his children, especially his son Martin, considering the age in which he lived and the poverty of the family, shows that the elder Luther was a man of unusual aspirations. It would seem as if a prophetic voice had whispered into the heart of the father some intimation of what his son would be and do, and thus urged him on to self-denying effort in behalf of his boy's education. He toiled in the mine

or in the furnace by day and by night, that his first-born son might be educated. This was the ruling passion of his life. By the time Martin was six years old he had been taught to read. Of Martin's school days we shall speak later.

Not much is recorded of Martin Luther's mother. And perhaps there was not much to record. The work of a wife and mother affords little material for written history. About all that her contemporaries said of Margaret Luther was that she was a good woman. In her humble home close to the Harz Mountains this true-hearted German woman, unknown beyond the narrow circle of her neighborhood, and little known even yet, was making a history destined to be recorded in many languages and in many lands and in the lives of many generations yet unborn. She was, no doubt, just a plain woman, a good housekeeper, as is the manner of German women, too busy with her duties as mother and wife to spend much time in day-dreams, and quite content so long as her husband and children were fed and clothed and sheltered and nursed. And she knew how to use the rod as unsparingly as did John Luther. Martin says that she whipped him once till the blood came because he took a nut without her permission. It was possibly not the size of the nut but the largeness of the lesson of honesty which the son needed that nerved the arm of the mother on this occasion.

What mental traits Martin inherited from his mother we can only conjecture. Perhaps he learned from her, while still a child around her knees, some of those les-

sons of faith, tinged with superstition, which clung to him all his life.

The Germans, like their neighbors in Northern Europe, have always been rich in folklore. The climate, the scenery, the productions, the occupations—these, with many other facts, always including the history of a people, give origin and shape to the nursery tales, the fiction and the poetry of a nation. Tolstoy, as much of a hermit as he has sought to make of himself, has nevertheless been true to the uncompromising seasons, the snowstorms, the fearful winters, and the short summers of his native land in the strange, half savage, half Christian literature he has sent forth from his home in the wide domain of the Czar, and true, too, to the political conditions of a nation that Americans cannot understand. And the folklore of the Germans is true to the land of its birth, a land of long winters and short summers, of snow and ice and the bitter north wind, of wooded hills and forest-covered mountains which woo the imagination to thoughts of sprites and genii, of plains and meadows and fields of grain, of cities and homes and patriotic traditions, and a land whose very history is an education to its inhabitants in all that is heroic in war and lovable in peace.

We may be sure that Frau Luther did not neglect to tell her children of the many traditions of her people, and also those weird stories of strange beings, on the earth but not of it, who kept guard over the mountain heights not far away, of those giants of old, and of the saints from St. Christopher to St. Ursula. And it was an age when the wisest men believed in witchcraft.

The year after Martin Luther was born a famous papal bull was issued, allowing the punishment of any person found guilty of practicing this occult art of evil. We smile now at all this superstition, or pity the men and women whose lives were tormented by it; but even Lecky, the rationalist, admits that the evidence brought forward in the trials of some that were accused of witchcraft was quite enough to convict, if witchcraft were only a fact. The stories that young Martin heard from his mother's lips about all these things affected his whole after life. The faith of childhood abides through all the after years, sometimes when men would throw it off; and faith that is wholly false, or half true, seems more tenacious than true faith. Martin Luther's realistic faith in the devil, who was to him a real personality, sometimes visible and tangible, and always alert and diabolically active, came, we may be assured, not from the Church alone, but from the stories he heard from his mother in his childhood home in Mansfeld. And when in after years he chose St. Anne, the reputed mother of the Virgin Mary, as his patron saint, his superstition was not merely the result of the training of the Church upon himself, but to the effect of that training upon the mother. Mothers, and not Churches or theological seminaries, make the faith of a people. If Martin Luther's mother had not been a believer in the Christianity of her times, Martin Luther had not been the reformer. Such a son could not have been the child of an irreligious mother. Men get their best or their worst natures from their mothers.

From the sturdy Hans Luther Martin inherited his

courage, his common sense, and his indomitable will; from Margaret Luther he inherited his religious bent and that honesty and sensitiveness of conscience which made of him first a monk and finally the reformer.

Luther's childhood, according to his own testimony, was not as happy as we generally suppose childhood to be. His father was a rigid disciplinarian, his mother was too busy with her manifold duties to be as thoughtful and considerate of the boy's feelings as she might have been, perhaps, and his sensitive nature (for he was evidently a sensitive child) distorted every little grievance into a great wrong, as his conscience magnified every act of evil into a mortal sin. But what he says on this subject should not be construed into bitter complaints against his parents. Much of what he said in his later life about every matter that he spoke of in his sermons and in his "table talk" was intended to illustrate or to impress some truth or duty. We cannot conceive of Martin Luther as a weak, shrinking, pliable child, always obedient and always docile. Such a child could not have grown into such a man. John Luther may have been too austere at times, but less firmness might have ruined his son. His love for his son was not that spineless love which yields complaisantly to the wishes of a child rather than meet the inevitable conflict between will and will involved in parental control. Martin Luther was a normal boy, full of life and fun and frolic, hard-headed like his father, no doubt, and not unhappy long at a time. And that his parents were wise and faithful, his whole career is witness.

CHAPTER II.

Luther's Education—At Home and at School.

This began at an early age, and began, as all education should begin, at home. The printing press had brought books within the reach of people to whose fathers they were unknown luxuries. And the elder Luther loved good books, and read as many of them as were accessible and as he could spare the time to read, for he was always a busy man. As the years passed, and the diligent and enterprising Hans Luther began to gather means, he bought himself a home, and made this home not only the center of comfort for his household, but opened its hospitable doors to men of learning especially, and around the table over their simple meals host and guests discussed many questions of politics, and more frequently questions of religion and matters of wide range in general knowledge. Froude remarks upon the marvelous extent of Luther's information, and we may be sure that the foundations for this broad and comprehensive learning were laid in the parental home at Mansfeld. A child learns more in the first ten years of his life than he learns in any other decade, however long he may live and however studious he may be. He finds a teacher everywhere—in birds, in sunshine, in trees, in flowers, in growing grain, in his companions, and, above all, in his parents and in his home. And Martin Luther's parents were faithful teachers and his childhood home was a good school.

He was sent away from home to school at a tender age. Frequently his father, busy as he was, would carry the little fellow to the schoolhouse on his back, especially when the weather was bad. A young man named Nicholas Emler often performed a similar kindly office for the young student. This young man afterwards married a sister of Martin Luther, and the latter used to refer good-humoredly to the days when he went to school on the back of his older friend, now become his brother-in-law.

George Emilius, who evidently had more scholarship in his name than in his pedagogic equipment, was young Martin's first school-teacher. This individual, historic by reason of his connection with the young life of the future reformer, seemed to have had only two qualifications for his place as school-teacher—his cruelty and his incompetency. He was a prototype of Master Squeers, of Dotheboys Hall. What he could not impart with the end of his tongue he imparted with the end of his rod; and since the former was small, the latter was necessarily large. Luther tells us that this same George Emilius flogged him fifteen times in one day, and all because Luther could not repeat what the master had never taught him. Such an experience was at least a lesson in numeration. The wonder is that the boy had sense enough to keep count through all these floggings. Such cruelty would have crushed the spirit of a weaker child or driven him to desperation. One marvels that the child did not get such a distaste for learning as to hate the very name of scholarship and the very sight of books. And the patience

and persistence of Hans Luther through all this inhuman treatment of his eldest son find their only explanation in the fact that the father had determined that the son should be educated. In after years Luther spoke of the school-teachers of the times as tyrants and executioners, of the schools as prisons and hells, and declared that, despite all the cruelty in the enforcement of discipline, little was taught the pupils. And one is not surprised that he had this opinion.

In the school at Mansfeld, notwithstanding the harsh discipline of George Emilius, young Luther learned to read and write, and even learned something of Latin. And like many another student of the Roman tongue, he found bewilderment and discouragement in the declension of Latin nouns and the conjugation of Latin verbs.

The schoolhouse where young Luther attended school in Mansfeld was standing a few years ago, at least the lower part of the building was. Its site is at the end of the principal street of the village, which climbed a hill to this point; and the school therefore commanded a view of the little town and the surrounding country. Here in the long ago the boy began his first systematic study of his mother tongue, a language he made the permanent speech of his people for all the ages since by translating into it the Bible, a book he did not see in its entirety till years and years after this.

When Luther was fourteen, his father decided to send him away from home to find a better school. George Reinicke, a son of the superintendent of the

mines in Mansfeld, had been in school in Magdeburg, and doubtless on that account the father chose to send Martin thither. The two youths went alone and on foot. George Reinicke afterwards in his manhood rose to a position of great usefulness in the mines at Mansfeld, and he and Luther were lifelong friends.

What particular school Luther attended in Magdeburg is not known, and little is recorded of his experiences in this city. He tarried here a year, in much poverty all the time, and in abject want some of the time. Whatever else he learned in the schools here, a twelve months' stay in this city by the Elbe was itself an education to the rustic but wide-awake youth from Mansfeld. Here was an old cathedral where was buried the body of Otto the Great, the founder of the city, and here were many fortifications, and, better still, much of the growing commerce of this advancing age. As the boy, often homesick and lonely, walked the one great, wide street and the many narrow, crooked streets of the city, he did not dream of the effect his life work would have upon the destinies of a people who had no doubt passed him by with only such notice and such charity as they were accustomed to give mendicant students. One of the popes had made Magdeburg the principal see of the Primate of Germany, and about the city gathered many Romish traditions and associations; but the city was early in its acceptance of the doctrines of the Reformation, and suffered greatly because of its Protestantism. In the Thirty Years' War, which was one of the bloody sequels of the Reformation, the city was taken by the

Imperialists after a protracted siege, and for three days it was given over to pillage and flame. Thirty thousand of its inhabitants perished, others threw themselves into the Elbe to escape from their pitiless conquerors, and only one hundred and thirty houses and the cathedral were left standing after this ordeal of blood and fire. But the city rose from its ashes, became a greater city than ever before, and it is to-day one of the great railroad centers of Prussian Saxony. And it has never given up its Protestantism.

A medical friend of Luther's records the only remembered incident of the young student's stay in Magdeburg. Martin was very sick with a high fever, and, as was the custom in those days, he was not allowed to drink any water. One day while all the members of the family were away from home, tormented by thirst, he crawled out of bed and into the kitchen, and, getting some water, he drank to his heart's content. Crawling back to his bed again, no doubt with direful expectations as to the consequences of his imprudence, he fell asleep, and awoke without fever. And so, even then, he was setting at naught the teachings of contemporary medical science, as he afterwards did contemporary theology.

As already stated, young Martin attended school at Magdeburg only a twelvemonth. At fifteen he was sent to school at Eisenach. This town is delightfully situated among wooded hills, and is even yet, though a place with less than 20,000 people, not merely a thriving little city, but likewise the center of much intelligence. Its streets are broad and clean, and it is,

as it no doubt was in the days of Luther, a worthy specimen of a German town.

Hans Luther had numerous relatives in Eisenach and in the country round about, and he sent Martin to school here with a hope, perhaps, that these kindred would assist the struggling youth in his effort to get an education. But none of them seems to have been in a position to help Martin except one named Konrad, who was a man of means and standing in the town.

In the old days in Germany it was not uncommon for men of prominence to send their sons to school without providing fully for their maintenance. In such cases the impecunious students would go singing from door to door, especially at Christmas time, and would gladly accept such help as the people of the town and adjacent country were willing to give them. And many a hungry lad received a loaf of good German bread or a sausage and, mayhap, a pot of beer, which was the daily drink of the people. Possibly this custom had its origin in the wandering life of the minstrels, who carried the song of minnesinger and troubadour from castle to castle and from home to home in Germany and other nations of Europe; and, no doubt, the serenade, so common in so many lands, particularly in Southern Europe and Spanish America, had a similar origin.

Martin Luther was one of the student serenaders of his times, and was never ashamed of the fact. In later life he spoke a kindly word in behalf of poor young men who were seeking an education in poverty,

and acknowledged that he himself used to go from door to door singing for a piece of bread, "for the love of God."

On one occasion, at Christmas time, Martin and some of his fellow-students approached a lonely farmhouse and sang their song. The owner came out with two great sausages in his hand, and called out gruffly: "Where are you, you young rascals?" The boys thought the old farmer was angry, and, taking fright, ran away as fast as their young legs could carry them. But the kind-hearted old farmer was not to be outdone in his efforts to satisfy the appetites of his student visitors, so he went after them and, calling them back, he gave them the sausages.

Another outcome of this wandering minstrelsy was one of the happiest episodes in the whole life of Martin Luther. In the town lived a prominent and well-to-do family named Cotta. Frau Cotta, the good Ursula, was attracted by the sweet and plaintive voice of the boy Luther, and drawn to him by his evident piety. Martin's voice was a tenor, and while it was not loud, it had great carrying power and was sweet and pathetically tender as he sang the hymns with which the German language was even then well supplied. The young student not only sang but played on the flute, which he learned without an instructor, and was a lifelong lover of music, which he declared was one of God's best gifts to men. Frau Cotta, with the full consent of her worthy husband, Konrad Cotta, invited Martin into her home; and if he did not become a regular inmate of the family, he was always

a welcome guest at her table. Her kindness to the youth afterwards to become the great reformer has made the name of Ursula Cotta a household word in every German home and given her memory a warm place in the hearts of the Germans in their native land and in every other land whither they have gone in search of homes and wealth. In this home Luther was first brought into intimate association with people of greater culture than the inhabitants of the mining town of Mansfeld, and thus acquired the social polish which afterwards made him the welcome companion of nobles and princes. From his peasant neighbors among the miners in his old home he had learned many of those rough lessons of life which he needed in his life work, especially that sympathy for the poor, without which no man can be a political and religious reformer; and now he was to learn some of those patrician lessons which he needed in order to enlist the coöperation of men of noble birth in the work for which he was all the time unconsciously preparing. The daughter of Pharaoh unwittingly and unintentionally trained for his life work the man that was to despoil Egypt; Frau Cotta unwittingly but gladly helped to prepare Martin Luther for the deliverance of the Church from the bondage of Rome, a bondage worse than the slavery of Egypt. But she did not live long enough to share in the fruits of the life labors of her protégé. The good Ursula Cotta died in 1511, six years before Martin Luther nailed his theses to the door of the church at Wittenberg.

It was her kindness to him and his knowledge of

her beautiful character that inspired Luther's saying, "There is nothing sweeter than the heart of a pious woman."

Young Martin found other friends at Eisenach. Among these was a learned man, one Father Wiegand, with whom he maintained in after life a warm and intimate friendship. This friendship was formed during the time that Luther was Father Wiegand's pupil at Eisenach. Another teacher there was a learned poet named John Trebonius. This teacher was evidently a gentleman, for it is recorded that on entering the schoolroom in the morning he would take off his hat and bow politely to the students. When some one of less good manners rallied him on account of this, he said: "Why, there may be among these youths a future mayor or chancellor or learned doctor."

This prophetic assumption was more than justified in the case of his pupil, Martin Luther. But whether the polite Trebonius discovered anything in the young man that inspired any special expectations with reference to Luther's future career we do not know.

Young Martin was a hard, diligent student. Whatever he may have lost during the weary, cruel days under George Emilius was fully made up by his application at Eisenach. He outstripped his fellow-students, and stood well in all his classes. And these days of youthful danger to his moral character were not marred by youthful excesses and dissipations. Even his worst enemies during his lifetime never charged him with dissolute habits. Men whose youths

were marred by gross sins have in after life rendered mighty service in the rescue of the fallen, sometimes outstripping in their zeal the activity of men of chaster lives; but when the Lord hath had need of a great apostle, a great reformer, a great revivalist, or a great religious pioneer, he has chosen a Paul, a Luther, a Wesley, or a Francis Asbury—men of clean youth, who never knew the debasing effects of drunkenness and debauchery. Great sinners have found a place of repentance and great usefulness in the saving of other great sinners; but sin has never been good training for great service in the Church.

At Eisenach Luther acquired a good knowledge of Latin, mastering it sufficiently well to write Latin verse.

In addition to Latin, Luther took substantially what we call the academic course at Eisenach. The authorities say he studied "the arts." These, according to the classification of the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages, were seven in number: grammar, logic, rhetoric (two branches), arithmetic, geometry, and music. It is not certain that Luther studied all these branches thoroughly. It is probable that he did not. But it seems certain that he gave much attention to literature and that he was fond of linguistic studies.

He thought well of the school at Eisenach, and spoke of it in high terms of praise in his after years. He had all of a true man's attachment for the places where he had attended school, and he remembered his associates with loyal affection, and never forgot those who befriended him in the days of his poverty

and struggle. When, years after this, he was one of the professors at the University of Wittenberg, he rejoiced to take into his own home a son of the good Ursula Cotta, who had been his friend in the time of his need at Eisenach.

Luther was eager for knowledge, and what he had acquired at Eisenach only served to stimulate his thirst. He longed to go to the University at Erfurt, the greatest center of learning in Germany at that time. By this time his father had prospered in business sufficiently to furnish the necessary means to gratify this ambition. Hans Luther about this time became one of the town council of Mansfeld, and had taken the rank of a burgher. It had been the ambition of his life that his son should be a lawyer. If Hans Luther could have foreseen what this going to Erfurt would mean, he would most likely have put his son to work in one of his iron furnaces and not put him in the university. But there was a Guide that was leading father and son by a way they knew not, and veiling from them a future of which, if they had caught a glimpse, they would have drawn back from in dismay. John Luther wanted his son to be a lawyer. The son was not averse to his father's ambition. The Lord willed that Martin should be a leader of his people into a broader place, and it was a blessing to father and son that the Lord had his way in the matter. God's way is always best.

CHAPTER III.

Luther at the University.

The old city of Erfurt, in Prussian Saxony, will always be a place of interest to Protestants and to every student of history. Associated with it are some of the epochs in the life of Martin Luther. In this respect it is equaled only by Wittenberg itself. The town was a thousand years old when young Martin Luther came hither, in his nineteenth year, to enter the university. The university itself was nearly two hundred years old when the young son of Hans Luther became one of its many students, and it enjoyed a prestige possessed by no other institution of learning in all Germany. The old city had its most prosperous days during the Middle Ages, when it was the capital of ancient Thuringia and when it was strongly fortified. The cathedral is said to be one of the finest specimens of Gothic architecture in all Germany. The old university buildings are still standing, but the institution itself closed the last chapter of its history in 1816. Of its ancient monastic establishments, only the nunnery of St. Ursula remains. The monastery of St. Augustine, where Martin Luther spent some of the unhappiest but most useful years of his life, has been an orphanage for nearly a hundred years. The cell where Martin Luther lived his hermit life, where he prayed and struggled and tormented himself after the manner of honest eremites, and where he caught

the first glimpses of the light that he was afterwards to carry to others, was kept intact for many years. But in 1872 it was destroyed by fire. Erfurt is no longer a city strongly fortified and the center of learning as in other days, but the prosperity that has come to it of late years is the prosperity of commerce and trade and manufactures.

Young Martin entered the university at Erfurt with one fact impressed upon him, the full significance of which came to him with increasing emphasis as the years transformed him from a boy into a man. "My dear father," he said, "maintained me there with loyal affection, and by his labor and the sweat of his brow enabled me to go there." This consciousness was worth more to him in after years than many things he learned at the old university. But it added grief to the sacrifice he made when he decided to turn aside from the course his father had marked out for him to enter the monastic life.

With a nature that was at once ardent and persevering, and with a thirsting after knowledge which was at this time the ruling passion of his life, it was with all the joy of an intense, ardently aspiring youth that he left his parents and the other members of his family and journeyed to the seat of the university where he was to take his degrees, and from which he was to come forth fully equipped for the life work for which his "dear father," as he always called him, had denied himself and the other members of the household.

At Erfurt Luther took up a full course of study. He

gave attention to all the several branches of philosophy, as it was called. The term, as scholars used it then, was encyclopedic. It embraced about all that men knew or sought to know—the ancient languages, mathematics, metaphysics, natural science, and what not. History, political economy, and allied studies seem not to have had a separate place in the curricula of those old schools. The learning of the early part of the sixteenth century was not yet out of its swaddling clothes. It was the poor, half-starved offspring of an unwilling mother, who did not love it and yet was afraid to allow it to use its little legs for walking. The Arabs had brought figures to Europe, and had left the name and the science of algebra with the Western nations. But mathematics still waited for the principia of Newton. One of the grammars that Luther studied was written by an author who lived a thousand years before. The jealousy and controversy between the Eastern and Western branches of the Church and the Eastern and Western divisions of the ancient Roman Empire had made Greek almost a forbidden language in the Romish Church, and only of recent years was it coming into knowledge again. Erfurt, the year after Luther entered the university, led the whole world in the publication of the first book printed in Greek characters. Astronomy harked back a thousand years and more to Ptolemy as its teacher. Columbus and other voyagers had settled the fact that the earth was round, but Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, and Galileo had not yet risen to teach men the near-by and far-away secrets of the night season. Luther

himself was taught to believe that the earth was the center of all the systems, and that sun, moon, and stars revolved around it. But later in life he learned something of the better way of accounting for the movements of the heavenly bodies, but was not quite willing to accept the newer knowledge. Chemistry was little more than the fragmentary facts the alchemists had gathered in their search for a method to turn the baser metals into gold.

The metaphysics taught at Erfurt, and to the study of which Luther gave himself with all the earnestness of a man who could never do anything by halves, was a mass of abstruse abstractions. It was the day of controversy between Realist and Nominalist. Men argued themselves into much intellectual and bodily warmth over the question of objects and qualities—whether an object really had qualities, or whether qualities were only abstract ideas and existed in the object when the mind of the observer put them there. Over this question (and if it has not been fairly stated, its abstruse absurdity must be the apology for the lack of a better statement) the Scholastics wrangled with all the ardor of men who certainly might have had a better employment, and whose very controversies were but a part of that monasticism in thought that scholars had borrowed from the teachings of the Church. Metaphysicians followed Aristotle, but perverted, after the manner of the age, the teachings of the old Greek philosopher. Martin Luther himself conceived a great horror of this old rival of Plato, but why it is not quite easy to explain.

"If Aristotle had not been a man," said Luther with characteristic directness, "he would have been the devil." At most, the philosophy of the times was much like the metaphysics of all times; it was like the vision of the poor blind man of Bethsaida who, after one touch of the Saviour's hand, saw men as trees walking. Certainly Luther was profited by all this study, but some of his profiting was the profiting of his mind in the strength which it received from all this wrestling with nominalism and realism. And his study of logic put into his hands a weapon which he used with mighty power in his controversy with the representatives of the pope in after days.

Learning was expanding under the broadening day. The light of the morning was touching the mountain tops. Later it would descend into the valleys. Some stood and watched the receding night, and mourned at its going. Others faced the rising sun, and were glad at his coming. These were the last days of the Scholastics and the first times of the Humanists. The one were the old fogies of the day; the other were the progressives. To the one there could be no new truth; to the other there could be no old truth. The former were conservative; the latter were destructive. But neither were truly constructive. The Scholastic believed that little was to be discovered, and nothing that was worth while; the Humanist believed that little was worth while except what he had discovered or expected to discover. And since the greatest intellectual discovery of the times was the learning of ancient Greece and Rome, he gloried in this. Scholas-

ticism could not withstand the onslaughts of this old-new learning, nor could the faith that had stood for it; and so men were not only learning classic Latin and the Greek of ancient Athens, but likewise the no-faith which cast off the old beliefs as unworthy the respect of men of scholarship and intelligence. This state of mind led to the most arrant hypocrisy. The old school of thought was about ready to be laid away in its grave. Popes, cardinals, and prelates had openly thrown it aside. And into the rubbish heap of Scholasticism they threw also their faith in much that the Church had taught. But pope, prelate, and cardinal were more than willing that the common herd of the Church should accept all its superstitions with greedy incredulity. A duped laity is always an easy prey for a venal priesthood.

Young Luther studied the new learning with ardent devotion. But he escaped the skeptical tendencies of this broader scholarship. The faith that had been taught him at his mother's knee was too strong to be thus shaken. He escaped another tendency of the new learning. Men who gloried in Cicero and Vergil and the rest came to despise their ignorant contemporaries. In their pedantic narrowness they gave so much attention to Latin that they could write that ancient tongue, if not speak it, better than they could their native German. Charles Spurgeon said that the scholars who gave the English-speaking world the Revised Version of the New Testament, published in 1881, understood Greek better than they did English, and the scholarship of more than one age has been

open to a similar criticism. But Martin Luther never ceased to be one of the common people. He never concealed the fact, but prided in it, that his father was a peasant. He had learning, but not the sort that puffeth up; and with that learning he likewise had the charity that edifieth.

At Erfurt Luther was brought under the tuition of some of the great men of his times. Among these was one Jodocus Trutvetter, an honest, learned, adherent of modified Scholasticism. Some of his old teacher's treatises on metaphysics survive to this day, and it is to be presumed that time has not added freshness to their original dryness. Another one of his teachers was Bartholomew Arnoldi, whose only distinction is due to the fact that Martin Luther once sat at his feet.

The Germans are distinctively a social people. At home and abroad, in the Fatherland or in the far-away lands to which many of them have gone, they preserve this characteristic. A true German always loves his home, his family, and his friends. This social trait has often led him into more conviviality than was quite temperate, but in his love of beer and wine and his pipe there is more of social gratification than the desire for stimulants. Who that has been fortunate enough to have among his friends a native of the land of Luther, can ever forget the cheery voice, the broad smile, the hearty laugh, the ready sympathy, and the warm hand clasp of his German friend? Generous and warm-hearted, the race, through all the long centuries of its dwelling in the north, has not

taken its nature from the snows and ice of its long winter, but has caught the sunshine of its shorter summers and turned it into social and genial warmth. And Martin Luther was a true German. He had in full measure the social nature of his people. His student life at Erfurt had its social side. His voice, which had won for him the friendship of Frau Cotta, made him the welcome companion of many friends and a welcome guest in more than one home. Some of his college friends were among the most distinguished men in Germany in the stirring times that were soon to come to Saxony and the neighboring States. Some of these were his helpers in the great Reformation; others were his bitter opponents. But none who knew him intimately at Erfurt, friend or foe, ever charged him with intemperance or dissolute habits during his college days. As has been already said, his was a clean youth.

It was likewise a religious youth. He used to say that prayer was the best part of study. He was a dutiful son of the Church. He sought heart comfort at her altars, and gladly gave to her the loyalty of his honest nature. If he had loved the Church less in these early years, he would not have been the great reformer in his after days. Always intensive, always positive, and believing the teachings of the Church with a faith which asked no questions except such as sought instruction, one is not surprised that his zeal became little less than fanaticism. And in this connection it may be stated, without anticipating what took place later, that he never ceased to honor the

Church. He did not forget that at her altars he had been baptized, and that from her he had received much instruction. His war was not so much upon the Romish Church as upon the papacy, its tyrannies, its usurpations, and its perversion and prostitution of the faith of loyal, honest men for its own sordid ends. Honest men, who are willing to know the truth and ready to accept it when they know it, whose moral perceptions have not been vitiated by lives of sin, have always felt the influences of the divine Spirit. What these divine impulses lead to is determined, of course, by the knowledge of the individual, his training, and his consequent sense of duty; but we may be assured that no honest and earnest soul ever yet went fatally and finally astray.

Martin Luther, like Saul of Tarsus, was a chosen vessel unto the Lord. From his youth up, the mark of heaven was upon him. Had he turned aside in his young manhood into paths of sin, open and inviting, then as now, on every side, and had he at any time been less obedient to the heavenly vision, he would have been less sensitive to the divine leading that was guiding his often trembling but always honest footstep along a way that he would never have taken at his own choosing. Hearing the divine voice from afar, he sometimes missed his way, but in all his wanderings he was seeking to do his Master's bidding. The Spirit does not throw a flash light along the whole pathway of life. Such light would be too bright for human eyes. Its light is like the shining of a lamp, not strong nor seen from afar, yet affording the light

we need as we press forward in the narrow way of duty.

Some of the chroniclers mention various traditions connected with Luther's stay at the university. One of these is to the effect that one morning he heard that a special friend of his, a young man named Alexis, had been assassinated. Luther hurried to the spot where the victim lay dead, and as he looked upon the face of his friend a deep horror of death came upon his own soul and a deep conviction of his own unreadiness for death. At another time his constant application to study brought on a severe attack of illness. His condition alarmed his friends, and alarmed Luther more. When he was at his worst a good man came to him and said: "Be of good cheer; God will not suffer you to die now, but will raise you up to comfort many souls." One of Luther's intimate friends says that this assurance and prediction greatly affected Luther, and had no small influence in shaping his after course.

One event occurred at Erfurt which certainly exerted a determining influence over his whole life. He was a great lover of books, and spent much time in the library. One day, while looking through some shelves in a dark room, he chanced to come upon a copy of the Bible. This was the Latin Vulgate. He took it down from its place with much curiosity, and when he looked into it he was filled with wonder. He had never seen a Bible before. All he knew of the Bible was what he had heard in the churches. He did not know that there was any more of the word of

God than the extracts which he had heard from the lips of priests. The volume was at once a discovery and a revelation to him. If this young student, now twenty years old, knew nothing of the Bible except what he had heard read in Latin in the churches, what immeasurable ignorance must there have been among the tens of thousands of his contemporaries who did not know Latin! Opening the book at random, his eye fell first upon the story of Samuel: the prayer of Hannah, her consecration of her young son to the service of the tabernacle, the call of the child to the prophetic office, and all the several events in a history to which men and women have turned again and again with never-failing interest. The young student was fascinated. He took up the book at every opportunity. We may only conjecture as to what he understood of what he read, and how far he went at this time in the formation of those convictions of truth which controlled him in his course as a leader of men into a better light. One thing is certain—he *had discovered that there was a Bible!*

With this discovery his life could never be the same. A blind man, once seeing, can never be content to be blind again. One song of the mocking bird bursting upon the ears of a deaf man would make deafness a torture forever afterwards. One hour with the Bible found in the library at Erfurt made Martin Luther potentially the Protestant and the reformer. He was earnestly seeking and slowly finding the way of life more perfectly. As he found it he led others into it.

CHAPTER IV.

Luther Becomes a Monk.

The sixteenth century had reached its fifth year. It was to write more history and make more than had ten previous centuries. It was the century of motion and commotion, of reformation and revolution, of transition and transformation, of battle and blood, when the minions of the papacy would make martyrs of the best men in the Church, of cruel despotism and the heartless Inquisition, of desperate and conscienceless effort on the part of the popes to retain a power that was never justly theirs. All the nations of Western Europe would feel the shock that was coming, and the echoes of the mighty impact would sound throughout the earth and through all the succeeding ages. It was the age of Luther and Zwingli, of Knox and Calvin, of Cranmer and the brave but ill-starred reformers of France and Spain. It was a century of upheaval. The very movements of men were like the downrush of an avalanche, the inrush of a tidal wave of the ocean, and the outburst of a volcano. It was a time of destruction and reconstruction. The century found the pope of Rome in supreme sway over the consciences of men; it left him forever despoiled of power in the leading nations of Europe, and of much of the temporal power and possessions that the Roman See had acquired through centuries of sacrilegious traffic in the souls of men.

The cup of Rome's iniquity was almost full, and God was raising up the men who would snatch that cup from her polluted hands and dash it to pieces.

It was the summer of 1505. Martin Luther had completed his regular course of studies at the university. He had taken his degrees, first as bachelor and then as master. This last was equivalent to Doctor of Philosophy. There was much pomp in connection with the last-named degree. A torchlight procession called on the young doctor and showered congratulations and tokens of good will upon him. His brilliancy and attainments had made him the wonder and admiration of the faculty and student body. As was expected of all who took this degree, he had delivered some lectures before the classes, his special theme being the natural sciences. He would continue at the university and study law, as his father wished. Meanwhile, however, he took advantage of the summer holidays to visit his parents at Mansfeld. We may be sure that those long June days, while their son was at home, were full of proud contentment to Hans Luther and the good Margaret. They had toiled and denied themselves that this their firstborn might receive what was much rarer then than now—a college education. And now their ambition was, at least in part, realized. Their son was a Master of Philosophy. He would become a great lawyer in the course of time; and their cup of joy was full. The German wife and mother looks well to her household, and of course the good Margaret did not let her son return to Erfurt without going carefully over his wardrobe

and mending and darning and stitching wherever such attention was needed by the mother's fingers. Little did she dream that when the son went away from home this time it would be many a long, weary day before he entered that home again.

We do not know all that passed between Martin and his father during this summer visit. It is certain, however, that the young man left home without expressing any purpose other than to prepare for the practice of law. Perhaps Martin did not know his own mind fully. He only knew that he was unhappy. The religious child and the religious youth was grown into a more religious man. Deep questions were stirring his honest soul. The Spirit was leading, but his untrained though sensitive and responsive conscience did not know whither he was being led. The one vital question, "Am I right with God?" was ever before him. And his soul had but one answer: "No!" The thought of death was a constant terror to him. It was the skeleton head that mocked him at every feast, haunted him in his waking hours, and came to him like a specter in his dreams. God was not to him the abstraction of the mystics nor the God of love revealed in the Bible; he was to this honest young man what the Church of Rome had taught him to believe—a being of terrible and inexorable justice. The thought of Jesus and the incarnation gave him no comfort. Was he not taught by the same Church that Jesus was an inflexible Judge whose wrath must be appeased through the intercession of saints, and who could be approached only through the offices of the

Church? Was not the pope his vicegerent, and every priest a creature and agent of the pope, and therefore of Christ himself? At times, in his despair, he was ready almost to curse God and die. This hopelessness was not the rebellion of a soul unwilling to give up its sins; it was the despair of a soul willing but improperly taught, seeking in vain to find the Saviour. The Spirit still, through all these weary, heart-breaking days and nights, was guiding this true seeker after God. Israel did not go directly from Egypt to Canaan, but journeyed by way of the Red Sea, Mount Sinai, and the wilderness. This was the better way for God's ancient people. Luther did not pass at once from the depths of penitence into the broad and fully comprehended light of conscious pardon. It was inevitable that he should go by way of the monastery and the priesthood into the full understanding of saving truth and its gracious realization in his soul. He was to be a soul leader, and soul leaders have always been equipped for their work in the school of suffering. Luther hungered and thirsted after righteousness. Once he had longed for learning; now he longed for holiness. Once his ambition had been to acquire distinction as a scholar and lawyer; now he aspired only to know God. He asked bread of the Church; it gave him a stone.

According to the teachings of the Romish Church, the monastic life is the sum of all righteousness. Its saints are not men and women who toil and suffer and live the common lot of mortals; they are always monks or nuns or priests or, mayhap, some man or woman

who has laid all at the feet of the pope for the enrichment of a hierarchy that has always been as greedy as the daughters of the horse leech. The way into the kingdom, according to its teachings, leads through masses and monasteries, the righteousness of others, whose works of supererogation constitute the stock in trade of the Church and may be obtained of the Church for a consideration or through the fires of purgatory, over both gates of which the Church stands guard. The history of the Catholic Church in all the countries and times where and when it has had undisputed control over the religious convictions of men is a record of facts clearly issuing from these blasphemous assumptions. Since the business man, the housewife, and the ordinary mortal cannot be saints, and since the priest has at his disposal all the righteousness one may need, why should one worry to be virtuous or honest or true? A lack of any of the essential elements of Christian character can be supplied from the ecclesiastical market. And, apparently, the supply never falls short of the demand. One might suppose that this second-hand righteousness, like second-hand clothes, might be a little musty by reason of age; but since it is acceptable to the Church, why should the fastidious receiver have any suspicion of its quality, not to speak of its supposed freedom from germs?

Luther's faith at this time was a true transcript of the teachings of the Church. Full of superstition as it was, it was thus because the faith of the Church was full of superstition. One is not surprised that he

was superstitious; the surprise is that he was not more superstitious. With a faith that was realistic, with a conscience that brooked no compromise, with an imagination that was vivid and which invested his thoughts and convictions with all the verisimilitude of life, and with a nature that never faltered in the path of deliberate purpose, it was altogether in harmony with the logic of his character and the influence the Church had over him that he should turn aside from the law to enter a monastery.

Several incidents in his life at this time brought his convictions to a focus. Once, at Easter, he had gone home for a visit to his parents during the holidays. While *en route* the little rapier which he carried, and which all travelers carried in those days, accidentally fell out of its case and severed a vein in one of his limbs. While his companion went for medical assistance he lay on the ground with the wound temporarily bound up, realizing the while that his life was in grave peril. This experience augmented the fear of death we have already spoken of and stirred his never-sleeping conscience to tormenting activity.

But another experience this summer finally determined the question as to how he should find the service of his Lord. He was returning from the visit to his parents already referred to. It was the second day of July, the traditional anniversary of the visitation of the Virgin Mary. At the little village of Stotternheim he was overtaken by a fearful thunderstorm. These phenomena, terrible always even to those who know something of electricity, were more terrible to

men in the superstitious age of Martin Luther. The flashing lightning and pealing thunder filled him with that awe one feels when he realizes that at any moment he may be stricken down to death. Suddenly a blinding flash of lightning leaped from the bosom of the cloud and buried itself in the ground at his side. He was terror-stricken. Trembling from head to foot, he prostrated himself upon his knees and cried out: "Help, holy Anne, beloved saint! I will be a monk!"

A man's real faith comes out in moments like this. This prayer and this vow reveal the inmost soul of Martin Luther at this time. He does not pray to Jesus. The Church has taught him to believe that Jesus is not a helper and a Saviour, but an awful Judge. His only hope is in the intercession of some saint in the far-away heavens, who might have influence with this fearful Judge. And he vows to be a monk because the Church has taught him that that is the only way to sainthood and salvation. It was a rash vow, a superstitious vow, and if he had only known better, the prayer itself would have been sacrilege.

The storm passed, the sun came out once more, and the young man went on his way to Erfurt, which was not far away. When he became calm again, he regretted his hasty promise to be a monk. But he was too conscientious and too superstitious to draw back. His vow had been made to Anne, his patron saint. If he should break faith with her, he could nevermore invoke her help. He must be a monk! Such was the ill faith of this ill-trained son of the Church! But the Lord Christ had better things for this honest man to

do than the begging of alms for men who could earn an honest living by their own labor, and the fasting and self-torture of a life that was at once unearthly and unheavenly. For a time he let his faithful servant walk in darkness, but guided him unerringly the while. For centuries before this honest men had spent their lives in monasteries, believing that thus they did God service, but Martin Luther could not thus serve God in the sixteenth century. No bushel in all Germany, nor in all the world, could hide a candle like this throughout a lifetime.

But the time of Luther's deliverance was not yet. The vow so hastily made was deliberately ratified. He thought of all that was involved in the steps—the disappointment of his father, the sacrifice of his life ambition, the popular contempt for monks, the hard, heartless life of the monastery, the separation from friends, the poverty and beggary of the monastic orders; in a word, the giving up of all that is in the world, not merely the bad, but the good as well. But why hesitate because of these things? Had not God called him? Had he not vowed to St. Anne? Had he not escaped death in the storm that day because he had appealed to her and promised in the hour of danger to be a monk? If his faith was revealed in the hour of his anguish by his prayer and his vow, his integrity and steadfastness were evidenced by his after course. With more light his choice would have been different. But he did not have the light, hence he kept faith with himself.

Martin Luther did not delay long. Delay was not

in his nature. In less than two months the monastery of the St. Augustine order at Erfurt had closed its gates upon him. He did not take time to consult his parents. He did not take his most intimate friends into his counsel. It was the call of God, and human counsel was not needed.

One evening he invited some of his friends to his apartments for a social gathering. He was full of good cheer, and the hours went by in delightful fellowship. The old songs were sung, the old stories told, and wit and humor enlivened the company of congenial friends. It was the last time Luther would indulge in such mirthful pleasure. When the company was at its gayest, the young host told his guests of his intention to be a monk. They received the announcement in astonishment. He must be only jesting; but he was not. They sought to dissuade him, but he was inexorable. He told them good-by, and that night or the next day he knocked for admission at the doors of the monastery. He left all his books and other belongings behind him, taking with him only a copy of the poems of Virgil and another volume, the works of Plautus.

The monks received him gladly. It was an honor to their order to receive such a recruit. For a month he was kept in seclusion. None of his friends were allowed to visit him. During that time he was expected to consider well the step he was about to take. At any time during these weeks of separation he was at liberty to reconsider his decision and return to the world. Meantime he wrote to his father, acquainting

him with what he had done. Hans Luther was deeply offended. He wrote his son a bitter letter, denouncing his course and giving his son to understand that he had virtually disinherited him. He even sought to exercise his authority as a parent. But all of this did not avail to shake Martin's purpose. Such conviction as his could not be shaken by even a father's commands. And his spiritual advisers reminded him of what the Saviour had said about loving father and mother more than him. The breach between the father and the son was not healed in many days, and we may be sure that this added to the loneliness and struggles of the young man, so full of life and ambition, who had so suddenly turned aside from the paths of worldly honor to become a religious recluse. Such conscientiousness was heroic. And this was the man that God was leading, and who would in turn lead others.

CHAPTER V.

Luther as Monk, Priest, and Teacher.

It was no easy life upon which Martin Luther entered when he became an inmate of the St. Augustine monastery at Erfurt. One of the principles of monasticism, pagan and popish, has been that the more uncomfortable one makes himself in body, the more apt he is to be pious in soul. The Augustine order, to which Luther attached himself, had no endowment in funds or lands; its income was derived from alms solicited by its members from house to house. And one of the first duties imposed upon the erstwhile student of the university and the young Master of Arts was to take his bag and go begging upon the streets of the city and upon the highways and byways of the adjacent country. This begging would naturally have a humiliating, and therefore salutary, effect upon a young man whose besetting sin was naturally supposed to be pride. This roving mendicancy certainly possessed the quality of mortifying a young man of sensitive spirit, if it did not unfortunately destroy his self-respect, and this state of mind was regarded as highly religious.

Evidently the brethren thought that the first and most important thing to do for the young recruit was to break his spirit. Besides being sent a-begging on the streets, he was given the most menial duties about the monastery. He swept the floors, he kept the gate,

he rang the bell; he was at once janitor, porter, and sexton.

His monk's uniform was evidently intended to be a means of grace. Over a white woolen shirt he wore a black frock, with a black leather belt around his waist, and on his head he wore a cowl, or monk's cap. A scapulary completed his attire. This was a narrow piece of white cloth wound about his shoulders and upper body, and was intended to remind him of the yoke which the Saviour said was easy, but which these religionists made very heavy for the young man. He wore this supposed garb of godliness when he went about his duties in the monastery or begging on the streets or sought his cell of prayer. When he put off these clothes, a prayer in Latin was read aloud to him, the purport of which was that he might put off the old man and put on the new. It is easy to imagine that clothes like these were not agreeable to a proud young man. These men thought that it was not enough to be poor; beggary and possible bodily discomfort were essential to godliness.

But the young man did not draw back or complain. He had entered the monastery, not in search of bodily ease, but soul peace. He was willing to do even more than his superiors required. His yearning spirit made him an obedient servant of his order for the sake of his Master, whom he saw despite the mists and fogs of Romanism. If monks in other ages and in other lands had found in the cloisters a hiding place for indolence and gross sins, Martin Luther did not enter a monastery with any such object in view. And it

may be said to their credit that the Augustine monks had a better name among the Germans than the members of some orders in other countries. So corrupt, indeed, had many of the monks become that the very name that tradition has brought down to us is but the synonym for indolent, self-indulgent hypocrisy. Most men and women who entered the monastic orders did so in good faith, no doubt, but imposed upon themselves burdens which the Saviour never imposed, and which were contrary to all that is human. Many of them broke down under a life that was so unnatural, and, falling into sin, concealed their sin under the garb of their several orders and degenerated easily enough into the most contemptible hypocrites, and in some cases into the most open and defiant sinners against the laws of God and men. Familiarity with sacred things has bred contempt for sacred things in many a clerical heart. The high priest entered the holy of holies only once a year, and then not without a sacrifice.

Luther did not lose his reverence for the rites and ceremonies of the monastic life. To him, then, these rites, as well as all the rites of the Church, stood for realities. It was this spirit of honest reverence that roused his righteous soul to its depths when Tetzel began to hawk indulgences from town to town in Germany.

Life in the monastery was one dull round of dreary and monotonous duties. There were eight different times for prayer—*horæ*, they called them—in the course of the day. Every monk was expected to say

not less than twenty-five paternosters and numerous Ave Marias. Fasts were common, and the fare was never sumptuous; and each day was a gloomy facsimile of its predecessor. With dingy walls and dingy cells, and no flowers, the joy of the springtime turned into the cheerlessness of winter; no wife, no sister, no hope, no change, no relief; the consciousness of sins, real or imaginary, tormenting the soul like a whip of scorpions—this, in part, was the monasticism to which Martin Luther gave himself in the very heyday of his young manhood. And he never forsook it until driven forth by an enlightened conscience to a life that was more real and to duties that were more genuine.

Luther, as was the rule, remained on probation twelve months before he became a real monk. At the end of that time, being adjudged worthy, he was admitted into full fellowship in the Augustine order. The reception was quite well calculated to impress the honest soul of Luther. The vows were solemn, and were for the whole of his after life. He promised to obey the Saviour, the Virgin Mary, the superior of his monastery, and the authorities of his order and of the Church, and he pledged himself to lifelong celibacy and chastity. Prostrating himself upon the ground in the form of a cross, holy water was sprinkled upon him and upon the clothes he was to put on. Then the monks gathered about him, singing hymns and assuring him that he was now as pure as an infant who had just been baptized. The ceremony sealed his connection with the order of St. Augustine. During the year of his pro-

bation he might have receded; now it was too late. But he never had any disposition to go back. He had put his hands to the plow. He became more zealous than ever. He took a monastic name, calling himself Augustine. He was afterwards ashamed of this, and spoke of it with satirical contempt. He said it was like the popes, who always changed their names when ascending the papal throne; and nothing popish suited his taste after he once broke with the papacy. He took some new saints into his personal calendar, St. Thomas among them. He was unremitting in his devotions. If, in the absorption of study, he had neglected any of the *horæ,* he would make up for lost time by sleepless nights given to his prayers. The robust constitution which he had inherited from his parents was put to the severest tests by the severity of his fasts and sleepless nights.

Meanwhile he gave as much of his time as might be to study. He was permitted free access to the Bible, and its study constantly enlarged his comprehension of truth. Days and weeks of sunshine are needful to bring the warmth of spring to the winter-chilled ground; and so, many months and even years of study of the Word of God were required to bring to the soul of Luther, long overshadowed by the traditions of the Church, a clear knowledge of the gospel. He was long in learning the fallibility of the Church and the infallibility of the Bible.

At first Luther found some peace of mind in the monastery. Honest faith even in an error will sometimes bring temporary rest to the soul, and Martin

Luther was honest to the core. And who will say that this temporary peace of heart may not become permanent where men and women have lived fully up to the light they have? But it did not become lifelong with Martin Luther. It could not. His study of the Bible made permanent soul rest in the rites of Romanism utterly impossible.

There are two great personal facts in the gospel. The first of these is that man is a sinner. The other is that he has a Saviour. The first of these facts Luther knew sorrowfully and all too well. The Catholic Church has never concealed this fact from its followers. On the contrary, it has laid unceasing, unmerciful emphasis upon it. It is because men are sinners, and because the knowledge of their guilt is and has always been insisted upon, that poor conscience-smitten adherents to the Church have sought pardon at the hands of priests and peace at Romish altars and in Romish monasteries and convents. And millions of money, some of it gathered in unholy conquests, have gone into Romish coffers because men were taught by Rome that the pope and his priests held the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and only those might enter who paid tribute to the gatekeepers. The guilty consciences of men created the demand for the stock in trade handled by these ecclesiastical mercenaries. The merits of the Saviour, as well as the long-stored-up righteousness of saints, were at the exclusive disposal of the "holy father" and those deputized by him to act as his agents, and since it was worth no small consideration to handle these spiritual

commodities, the holy father turned his agencies into a means of much pecuniary profit. Such a monopoly prevented any manipulation of the market by bulls and bears in their own interest, and saved the devout believer from imposition by greedy middlemen. Such considerateness on the part of his holiness toward his numerous customers filled many of them with admiration close akin to worship, and the head of the great ecclesiastical supply store was indignant when any had the temerity to question the character of his goods and deny his right to sell them. His infallible seal made any article that he sold or gave away (and sometimes he was kind enough to give some of his blessings away) genuine and current in heaven and on earth.

Luther's sense of guilt was persistent and intense. It was like the bitter experience of David. Like the ancient king of Israel, he could have said: "My sin is ever before me." It was this sense of sin that drove despairing souls like his to the cloister. But the cloister brought him no settled peace. The Church said, "Go to the confessional," and he confessed every day. He annoyed his confessor with the very honesty and fullness of his confessions. He wanted to confess everything in detail, all he had ever done in all his life that was wrong, and all his temptations to do wrong as well. His conscience made sins out of temptations and crimes out of sins. The monks told him to do good works, but he said he was a sinner in the sight of God and he did not think that anything he might do would appease the divine wrath. As he read

of the justice of God in connection with justification his soul drew back in horror. What hope could he have from the justice of God? The Church said, "Fast," and Luther fasted, at one time abstaining from food and sleep almost completely for seven weeks. The Church commanded penance, and Luther put on a hair shirt and tortured his poor body into cadaverous leanness. Once, so tradition says, he was in such distress that he shut himself in his cell and did not come out for four days. At last one of his fellow-monks, who knew something of Luther's state of mind, took some of the choral boys of the monastery and attempted to enter his retreat. The door was fastened on the inside, and the only way of getting in was to force the door. When they entered the cell they found Luther lying unconscious on the floor. Forthwith they began to sing. The soft music they made gradually brought the poor hermit back to consciousness and to life. Poor Martin knew that he was a sinner, but he did not know that he had a Saviour. But this knowledge was to come to him. His night was far spent. The day was at hand.

Hid away in the monasteries of this age, and of other ages that had gone before it, were some good men who had learned to look beyond the walls of their monastic homes and beyond the rites and routine of their lonely life to the One who had died for them, and, looking, found a life and a light that was not of the cloister. Such men as Francis of Assisi and Thomas à Kempis were the salt that saved monasticism from utter corruption, and the light that shed a

Christly illumination into the darkest cells of Romish monasteries. In the monastery at Erfurt Luther was to find at least one man who had learned the way of life more perfectly than the Church taught it. He too had struggled with guilt and doubt. And he had found the way to peace and salvation by the way of the cross. Ananias had led Paul into the kingdom; this man was to lead Martin Luther. His name was John Staupitz. And he was the vicar-general of the Augustine order in Germany.

Staupitz came of a noble German family, but little is known of his early history. He had consecrated himself to the monastic life early in his youth, but did not find spiritual peace in the monastery. Groping in the dark, he at last found the light; and having found it himself, he was prepared to help the struggling Luther. He seems to have been attracted to Luther from the very beginning of his acquaintance with the young monk. He came to the monastery at Erfurt in his regular visitations, and Luther gladly opened his heart to him as to a spiritual father. Staupitz understood his case at once, and he gave him the first counsel that brought peace to the long-troubled soul of Luther. He told him that repentance, and not penance, was acceptable to God; that a sense of sin was not an evidence of enmity to God but a different attitude; warned him against the danger of exaggerating his sins; counseled him to study nothing but the Bible; and, best of all, told him that Jesus alone can save. Furthermore, he said to Luther: "Love him who first loved you."

This was a new gospel to Luther, and it was as grateful to him as the light of the morning. It was the water of life to his famishing soul.

But the struggle was not yet ended. Luther did not as yet fully understand the light that had come to him nor the water of which he had but tasted. Shortly afterwards he fell sick. His old remorse returned. He was ready to despair. An old monk came to see him in his cell. Luther opened the depths of his soul to the venerable man. Luther's visitor was not skilled in dealing with troubled souls, perhaps, but he simply said to Luther: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." From his very childhood Luther had known the Apostles' Creed, and had recited this article of it a thousand times. Before this it had been to him a far-away truth. Now it becomes a living, gracious fact. It took out of his mind the error that sinners can atone for their sins, or that they can be removed by priestly absolution or purgatorial fires. Learning this, Luther could never be a blind fanatic again. The light had come to his soul.

Years after this, while reading Paul's letter to the Romans, his attention was fixed upon the statement in the seventeenth verse of the first chapter, which is a quotation from the prophet Habakkuk: "The just shall live by faith." His meditations upon these words led to the formation of those convictions relative to the great doctrine of the New Testament, the doctrine of the great Reformation, and the doctrine of the great revival of the eighteenth century—the doctrine of justification by faith.

Of course Martin Luther did not immediately reach a full comprehension of all that he now accepted as true. His spiritual eyes were not as yet adjusted to the greater light and all that it revealed. For years after this he was a devout Romanist, never dreaming that he was to lead in a reformation that he would perhaps at this time have regarded as an unholy schism.

After some two years spent in the monastery at Erfurt, Martin Luther was ordained a priest in the Roman Catholic Church. It was a great occasion. Hans Luther came to see the ordination. The old father had been very stubborn in his opposition to his son's course. But two of his sons had died in a visitation of the plague. He had heard that Martin, too, had fallen a victim to it; and all this sorrow, together with the joy he experienced when he learned that his favorite son was spared, softened the old man's heart, and he was fully reconciled to his son, now to be a priest.

Luther was much impressed with the ordination service. But he said in after times, when he thought of the words of the officiating bishop, "Take authority to offer sacrifices for the living and the dead," that it was a wonder the earth did not open and swallow them up.

A year later he went to Wittenberg to take his place in the new university just established by Frederick the Wise, the good elector of Saxony, so long Luther's friend and protector in the stormy years of the great Reformation.

CHAPTER VI.

Luther at Wittenberg.

To every Protestant peculiar interest attaches to the little city of Wittenberg. Here Martin Luther spent the greater part of his eventful life. Here took place the outward beginnings of the great Reformation. Here was the storm center of the great movement during the tempestuous years of his strenuous life. Here he began to preach, timidly and tentatively at first, but later with a boldness and a fidelity to the Scriptures and to his new-found faith that startled all Germany, and finally woke up the sleeping consciences of men from the shadow of the Vatican to the shores of the Arctic Ocean. Here he posted his ninety-five theses to the door of the Church. Here he burned the papal bull of excommunication. Here he married and spent most of his real home life. Here, after he had served his generation by the will of God, and blessed it with a life that made it one of the noted generations of the race in all its history, he found sepulture. Here in the Schlosskirche rest his ashes, awaiting the resurrection.

Wittenberg is on the right side of the Elbe River, fifty-five miles southwest of Berlin, now the capital of the great German Empire. It has never been a large city. The population twenty years ago was less than 15,000. The university where Luther was one of the faculty was merged, in 1817, into the University of Halle, but the name is preserved in the combined institutions. The French, during some of the Napole-

onic wars, broke down the door to the church on which Luther nailed his theses, but an iron door has taken its place. The house where Luther lived after he left the monastery is still preserved measurably intact, and travelers who visit the little city are shown many places connected with the history of Martin Luther and his colaborers. When Charles V. captured the town, a year or two after Luther's death, some of his Catholic friends pointed out the tomb of the reformer and urged him to burn the dead body of the man who had made so much trouble for the emperor.

"I am making war upon the living, and not upon the dead," was Charles's reply. The emperor, who was unfortunate in having greatness thrust upon him, and whom we shall meet again in the course of this history, was not wholly bad; and one is not surprised that he, in sheer disgust, gave up the throne for a cell in a monastery late in life.

The University of Wittenberg was established by Frederick the Wise, as he was called, in 1502. This good prince, while he never openly adopted the faith of Martin Luther, nevertheless showed him toleration, and saved the reformer's life at the Diet of Worms. When Maximilian died, he was offered the place of emperor thus made vacant, but declined the honor and cast his vote for the young Charles. This choice led to the union of the kingdom of Spain and the German Empire, and, what is more important in its bearings upon the history of Martin Luther, doubtless brought about such relations of cordiality between Charles V. and Frederick that the latter was inclined

to be more lenient toward a man whom Frederick regarded with so much favor.

Frederick intrusted the selection of a faculty to Staupitz, the vicar-general of the Augustine order in Germany, and this judicious ecclesiastic fulfilled the trust committed to him with much wisdom. He gathered about him a group of competent and learned men, and the new institution soon acquired a great reputation for scholastic worth. Shakespeare makes Hamlet one of its students, and no university in all Europe exerted a wider influence. Philip Melanchthon was one of the teachers, and a venerable man named Pollich, who was called by his admirers "The Light of the World," because of his learning, had a place in the faculty. And Staupitz did not forget Martin Luther. Exercising his authority over the Augustine order, he brought Luther from Erfurt to Wittenberg in 1508.

The instructions to go to Wittenberg were so sudden and summary that Luther did not have time even to bid his friends farewell. Taking a final look at the cell where he had spent three years that he could never forget, he gathered his simple wardrobe, a few classic books, his Bibles (he now had two, one of which had been given him by Staupitz), and a few other simple belongings, and, storing them in his portmanteau, hastened to Wittenberg.

He began his work in his new place with lectures on philosophy. The natural sciences, which were in their infancy at the time, as we have seen, seem to have been the specialty to which he gave his attention. His work in the university made it necessary for him to lecture

on Aristotle, and the old Greek was not a favorite of his when he became thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Reformation. He considered Aristotle as essentially atheistic.

The study and teaching of philosophy were not quite to his liking. From the moment he reached Wittenberg he longed to give his exclusive attention to theology; "but," be added in a letter to a friend, "the theology which seeks the kernel in the nut, the pulp in the wheat, and the marrow in the bones. However," he went on, "God is God, and he will guide us unto death."

He did not neglect his philosophical lectures, but he betook himself to the study of theology. He was already familiar with the Schoolmen. He had waded with more or less profit through what they had written about the questions that had engaged their abstract, hair-splitting minds and speculations. And he had read and meditated deeply upon the works of St. Augustine, the patron of his order. The teachings of Augustine greatly influenced his opinions throughout his whole life. It is easy to trace the effects of Augustine's theories touching election and freedom of the will in what Luther taught and believed. But now, as for months before this, he gave precedence in his studies to the Bible itself. In order to understand this, he applied himself assiduously to the mastery of Greek and Hebrew. He was not satisfied to take his knowledge of the Bible from a Latin translation.

The next year after he came to Wittenberg, Luther took his bachelor's degree in divinity, and in 1512 he

took his doctor's degree. These degrees not only gave him the privilege, but imposed upon him the duty, of lecturing on theology. This was much to his liking. He gave attention in his lectures, not to the dry theories of the scholastics, but to the Bible itself. And his lectures attracted immediate attention, and in course of time drew many students to the university.

Up to this time Luther, though an ordained priest, had not preached. After going to Wittenberg his friend and official superior, the worthy Staupitz, asked him to preach in the Augustine Church; and some of the authorities say that he was chosen by the University Senate as preacher for the college. Luther objected strenuously to this arrangement. "It is no small matter," he said, "to speak to men in God's stead. Why, it would be the death of me before three months." Staupitz assured him that it would be a good way to die, and the reluctant Luther was constrained to yield.

The Augustine monastery at Wittenberg had not been opened more than two years when Luther took up his abode there, and the foundations of the church connected with it had just been laid. In the square in the town was a small wooden chapel, twenty feet wide and thirty feet long, the walls of which were ready to tumble down, and whose whole appearance was unsightly. The pulpit of boards, three feet high, was as unsightly as the outside of this insignificant building. Here Martin Luther began to preach, and here was the birthplace of the great Reformation. Like the Master whom it was to exalt, it was born in a house little better than a stable.

Luther's preaching attracted immediate attention.

He had told Staupitz that he would not imitate his predecessors, and he did not. His voice was at once far-reaching and musical; his countenance glowed with animation; he spoke his native tongue with fluency; his imagination was vivid and picturesque; he was profoundly in earnest, and such earnestness could not fail to impress others. He had found the way of life and was eager to show it to others; and he had a message for men fresh from the Word of God. It was his appeals to the Bible itself that really gave him his power over men. He expounded the Bible, and his expositions were divine truths set on fire by a soul that was itself aflame, and by that divine Spirit who never fails to place his indorsement upon the gospel. No wonder men listened and marveled. They were hungry for the bread of life, and here was a man who had it in plenty and in purity. "This man," said the learned Pollich, "will put all the doctors to the rout. He will introduce a new doctrine. He will reform the whole Church. He builds upon the Word of God, and no one can overthrow or resist that." Like Caiaphas, but with better motives than inspired the old Jewish high priest, Pollich spoke more wisely than he knew.

Luther did not preach in the little wooden chapel long; in a little while he was chosen city preacher by the council of Wittenberg, and in the city church, the university chapel, and in the church of the Augustines, when it was finished, he found a place and a hearing. The common people heard him gladly, and princes were among his hearers. His patron, the wise Frederick, listened to him on at least one occasion. Every

great reformation and every great revival has begun first in the closet and afterwards in the pulpit. Martin Luther had prayed to the Father which seeth in secret, and the Father which seeth in secret was rewarding him openly. The harvest was ripening; the harvester was being trained for the reaping.

Staupitz, who was a very busy man, needed an assistant in his work as a vicar-general of the Augustine order, and called Luther to his aid. This call gave Luther a wider field of usefulness. He visited the monasteries of the Augustines, and carried with him the deputed authority of his chief. These visitations gave him opportunity to learn many facts as to the conditions of the people as well as the members of his order. And his visits were not perfunctory nor rounds of social feasting and enjoyment. He did not mince matters where he found any wrongdoing. In some places he says he found that the monks were in gross ignorance of the Bible; "they knew more about St. Thomas than they did St. Paul." In one monastery he found much dissension, and, regarding this as due to the lack of firmness on the part of the superior, he forthwith discharged that official from his place. Stern as he was, he was not intentionally unkind or unjust. He knew how to use both salt and salve. Withal he was a busy man. His life now was full of the activity for which he was fitted by temperament and training, and the great common sense, which was always his, stood him in good stead in his multiplied duties. He lectured his classes on the Bible, which was his favorite work; he visited the monasteries; he kept up his

devotional habits. He said he needed two secretaries to keep up his correspondence. He often spent whole nights in the preparation of his lectures. He did not slack in his preaching, and all the while he had that strength of soul which comes from an enlightened and personal faith in Jesus Christ. He was a ritualist still; but the mass, the holy communion, penance, and priestly absolution were to him the shadows of deeper realities. The true foundation was laid; the false superstructure would fall away in the course of time. His heart was in the kingdom; his head would come in by and by. The Spirit's witness is not necessarily an indorsement of men's creed; it is an indorsement of their faith in Jesus Christ. A genuine Christian experience is a sure teacher of righteousness, but it is not at once an infallible guide into correct theology.

As already stated, Luther spent most of his life after this period at Wittenberg. But a year or so after he went to the university there he was summoned back to Erfurt for a time. Here he took the same academic standing as at Wittenberg and continued his lectures. After a year and a half he returned to Wittenberg, and from this time onward for many years he was identified with the university there.

An occasion came about this time when Luther's fidelity and fortitude were put to the test. The plague broke out at Wittenberg. This fearful pestilence of the Middle Ages, which sometimes depopulated whole districts and which the superstitious people of those dark days regarded as a visitation of divine wrath, or a scourge from the devil himself, evidently originated

in unsanitary conditions, and disappeared from Western Europe with the advance of Christian civilization. The people of Wittenberg fled before the pestilence, and Luther was urged to take flight from the city. He flatly refused to do so, however, and came through the visitation unharmed. Unwittingly he was setting in operation moral forces which would ultimately banish this scourge from his own land, as well as from all lands where the better way that he had found was accepted by the people. True Christianity, like its Author, has gone over the earth healing the sick.

In 1511 Luther enjoyed a privilege that he greatly appreciated, and one which exercised no small influence over his after life. Some difference of opinion, and even very serious differences, but the full nature of which is not explained, had arisen between Staupitz and some of the Augustine monasteries. The matters were so important that it was deemed best to submit the questions at issue to the pope, and Luther was commissioned to go to Rome on this business. The journey was made on foot. He was accompanied by another monk and a layman, who went along as helper and companion. The pedestrians found lodging and entertainment by the way in various monasteries. Crossing the Alps into Lombardy, they tarried for some days in a monastery of the Benedictines. This monastery was rich in endowments, and the simple-minded Luther was astonished at the luxurious life of the inmates. Their home was a palace, with rich furnishings. Marble, silk, and dainties were everywhere, and the brethren fared sumptuously every day.

Wine flowed freely, and meat was eaten every day, regardless of all the restrictions of the Church. Here was gilded monasticism, seclusion without sacrifice, a hermitage without hardships. The honest Luther ventured to suggest to his hosts that they should abstain from meat at least on Fridays, but the hint was not taken kindly. The porter told the Germans that it might not be safe for them to stay longer, and the travelers took their journey toward Rome. These men from the north saw many things by the way that interested them greatly. The fertile fields of fair Italy were a revelation of beauty to them; but the hot sun of this southern land was too much for Luther, and when he reached Bologna he was taken seriously ill. For a time he thought he would die, and his old distress of mind came back to him. But he soon reassured himself with the words that had given him comfort on so many occasions, "The just shall live by faith," and, quickly recovering, went on his way.

No Mohammedan pilgrim ever approached Mecca, and no devout Jew ever came in sight of Jerusalem with more enthusiasm than Martin Luther felt when he first viewed Rome. Falling upon his knees, he exclaimed: "Holy Rome, I salute thee!"

"The sorrow of disillusion" awaited him. It had been better for his faith as a Roman Catholic if he had never looked upon the Vatican. He declared afterwards that he would not have missed seeing Rome for a hundred thousand florins. But for his visit there, he said, he might have feared that he had misrepresented the pope and his doings and the doings of the

priests. "But as we see, we speak," he added. In his after life he made the indignant confession that he ran about from church to church "like a crazy saint," believing all the absurd things that were told him about relics and images and saints; and he rejoiced that it was his privilege, he added, to read mass in the holy city. He almost regretted that his parents were still alive, for if they were dead he could now pray them out of purgatory. But the better faith that was born within him revolted at some of the superstitious nonsense that he was taught to believe, but which no priest at Rome had any faith in at all. Once, when climbing on his knees up the stairway that was said to have led to Pilate's judgment hall, and up which the Saviour was reputed to have gone to his sentence of death, up which devout Romanists still climb, he rose from his knees, exclaiming: "The just shall live by faith."

He heard many things in Rome that shocked him. The city still reeked with the foul odors of the Borgias. He heard vague hints of Alexander, who, less than a score of year before, had occupied the papal chair: of his children, his brother's murder, of the unspeakable incest charged to him, and heard other things that were enough to drive him from popery forever. But the spell was not yet broken.

At the time of Luther's visit Julius II. was pope. This ecclesiastic was somewhat better than Alexander, but he had his own characteristics. Among them was an overmastering desire to extend the papal power and possessions. And he was not content to do this by political intrigue and popish treachery; these were

too slow and uncertain, and he called the sword into requisition. Occupying a seat which St. Peter was supposed to have been entitled to, and claiming power upon the assumption that the Master had accorded that power to Peter, he considered himself as entirely absolved from the restrictions placed by the Master upon Peter when he said to the brave but mistaken apostle in the garden: "Put up . . . thy sword . . . ; they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Julius made war, won battles, extended his domain by the use of the sword; and still sat in Peter's seat. Once, when fighting the French, he was reading a prayer in behalf of the success of his army, when news was brought that his soldiers had been defeated. Uttering a bitter curse, he threw the prayer book down and exclaimed: "Art thou become a Frenchman?" It was before this sacrilegious usurper that Luther came to present his matters. Nothing is recorded of this audience, nor of the decision rendered by Julius, and we know nothing of the impression made upon Luther at the time by what he saw of the pope. Julius was a man of affairs and held a strong hand upon the municipal government of Rome, keeping the streets clean and furnishing good police protection; and the general impression left on Luther's mind was that he was at least a good civil executive. And at this time Luther was as devoutly loyal to all the teachings of the Church as to the supremacy of the Roman pontiff.

That which surprised and bewildered Luther most was the reckless irreverence of the priests. Rome was honeycombed with skepticism. The man who believed

in Christianity was considered a fool. Men made open ridicule of everything sacred. Once, when Luther was celebrating mass with some of the Roman priests, one of them whispered impatiently to him: "Hurry up! Make haste and send the Son home to his mother, our Lady!" And another priest boasted in his presence—and laughed at his smartness—that on one occasion he had changed the words of consecration in the communion to: "Bread thou art, and bread shalt thou remain!" and "Wine thou art, and wine shalt thou remain!" Luther carried the memory of this profanity through the after years, and the memory was no small factor in moving his honest soul to righteous revolt against the power of Rome.

Of course Luther saw the places of greatest interest about Rome, and his knowledge of the classics gave him a keen relish for all the historic sites about the ancient and renowned city. His soul was stirred within him as he walked through the dark passages of the catacombs, where tens of thousands of the early Christians were buried, many of whom had died in martyrdom. He looked upon the Vatican too, where the Roman pontiffs had held court like kings, and, like the worst of kings, have sometimes practiced all the infamies of royalty. And he saw St. Peter's, not yet completed, and to finish which Leo afterwards sold the indulgences. This fated structure, while it was to stand forth as the greatest monument of papal taste and pride, was nevertheless almost the undoing of the papacy itself. Rome was full of ancient ruins and modern splendor; of ancient learning and modern art; of

ancient faith and modern skepticism, and of ancient superstition and modern renaissance. Luther saw and felt much of all this, and went away from the famous and infamous city with mingled impressions and memories which lingered painfully and pleasantly through all his after days.

Turning his face to the north, he and his companions retraced the long road over the sunny plains of Italy, the dizzy heights of the Alps, and the wooded hills of Southern Germany, and were once more at home in the Fatherland. And once more he took up his duties at Wittenberg, a wiser man than when he went away and, mayhap, a sadder one.

It was providential that Luther did not visit Rome earlier in his life. As sincere as the sunlight, with a will that never halted halfway in its pursuit of an undertaking, with an energy that was dynamic, he might have made a blaspheming Voltaire or a fanatical Ignatius Loyola; he could never have made a hypocrite. The deeper spiritual knowledge that had come to him a few years before had taught him that rites and forms were but accessories to faith, and not essentials of faith; and, learning this, the mockeries of Italian priests and the hollow pretenses of Romish popes did not disturb his faith in the everlasting Word of God. The leaves were shaken and some dead branches fell off, but the tree stood firm.

Meantime the age was preparing for the man, and the man was preparing for the age. And the Lord of the age and of the man was waiting and ruling and overruling until the fullness of time should come.

CHAPTER VII.

Luther and His Age.

Martin Luther was no mere opportunist; neither was he the product of his times. Of course the spirit of his age—that spirit of restless, reckless adventure and discovery; of rebellion against the established order of things and of resistance to the tyranny of pope and priest and prince which was abroad in the Western nations in the closing decade of the fifteenth and the opening years of the sixteenth century—thrilled this man of destiny and stirred him to action. And of course the idolatrous degeneracy of the Church, its profanation of the most sacred things and its prostitution of the faith and conscience of its helpless and credulous dupes for the sake of its own sordid and selfish ends, appealed mightily to the honest soul of Martin Luther and gave direction to his convictions and to his course. But he was not the creature of his environments, nor the selfish politician who seeks to foment social and civil disorder for his own advancement to place and power. Nor was this great-souled man in any sense the spiritual offspring of Rome. Such a mother would have spurned such a son from her breast. Indeed, she was honest enough to disclaim and disinherit him; and since she claimed to be the only mother of the children of the Lord, she denounced Luther as a child of the devil.

But this was a wonderful age, this age in which Martin Luther was born and lived and labored, and

upon which he left his impress so deeply. It was the age of increasing light. The day was breaking. For a thousand years there had been twilight—not the short twilight of the tropics, but the twilight of northern latitudes, which is neither night nor day. Men slept or were half awake or walked in their sleep. Men saw ghosts. Faith degenerated into superstition. The Church of Rome, like many another silly mother, told her credulous children stories of witches and ghosts and wicked beings in other ages, and thus hushed into a troubled sleep her devotees, or moved them to bloody and hopeless warfare against the invaders of the holy land and other wicked heretics. The lurid glare of a martyr's bonfire frequently illumined the darkness for a season, and, going out, left the world in deeper darkness than before. Men's worst passions ran riot. They thirsted for each other's blood, or gloried in the triumphs of wars of conquest. Nations rose and fell. Western Europe was one great battlefield. The hordes of Northern Europe had laid waste the fair fields of Italy, overthrown the power of the Roman Empire in the West, and had then fallen to quarreling among themselves over the spoils of their conquests. Northern and Southern blood mingled and made new races. The Italian and German, the Goth and the Gaul, the Norman and the Briton, the ancient Spaniard and the fair-haired denizens of the far North were no longer alien peoples to each other. Charlemagne built an empire that for a time rivaled the imperial splendor of ancient Rome. The German Empire, to which Charles V.,

the grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, succeeded Maximilian about the time that Luther had stirred all Europe with his theses, was the only remaining part of this ancient kingdom at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Knight-errantry had served its romantic and chivalrous mission. The Crusades had given a sacred outlet for men's warlike passions. The Turk, after a temporary expulsion, had once more occupied the holy city, and Constantinople, the last remaining stronghold of the waning power of Rome, had been overthrown by these insatiate and fanatical conquerors. And the Turk was at the very gates of Vienna and threatening the very life of Western Europe. The Moors, after many years of power in Spain, had been driven by Ferdinand, at the head of the united armies of Castile and Aragon, across the Straits of Gibraltar, or made slaves in the lands of their former possession and power. Spain had been welded into unity by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella. Britain, conquered in turn by Roman, Saxon, Dane, and Norman, had incorporated into its people and its national life that which was best in the character of its several masters, and was itself rising to the mastery of an empire that would rival in strength and duration all the empires of all the ages. France, after many vicissitudes, was strong, with the restless, irresistible spirit of ancient Gaul. Germany, always loving liberty and never long a conquered land, did not lose its national characteristics by reason of its merging, at its own instance, into the great empire over which Charles V. had been selected to reign—an empire which swept

from the shores of the Mediterranean on the south to the Baltic on the north, with only the coast of Portugal and France breaking the continuity of its seashore. The map of modern Europe was beginning to take shape. Confusion was giving place to order, chaos to cosmos.

There is a never-failing charm about the Middle Ages. To them the imagination turns again and again. It was a time when men made more poetry than they wrote. Mystery, uncertainty, half-knowledge—these elements of the poetic and romantic inspired and limited men's actions in these dark centuries, and these same elements attract us to that half-known period with a fascination which is a blending of uncertainty and curiosity. Knowing a better day, we are glad that we did not live a thousand years ago; and yet the condition of the world ten centuries ago appeals to us with all the power of a half-forgotten past, of days long gone, and of men who once lived and loved, and suffered and died, and whose memory is like the dreaming visions of the night season.

The awakening, long delayed, came at last. A notable change came on during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and it came rapidly. Within a hundred years men made more progress in arts and learning, and in every department of life, than they had made in a thousand years. It was a time of invention, of discovery, and of progress.

The old story that Edward III. used gunpowder the first time it was ever used in Europe, in the battle of Crecy, may not be accurate, but it was about this

time that men began to appreciate the possibilities of this combination of sulphur, saltpeter, and charcoal. The Greeks doubtless knew something of it, the Chinese certainly were acquainted with it long before this; but it was to all intents and purposes a European discovery, made by Friar Bacon, or some one else, during the fourteenth century. And, as paradoxical as it may seem, the discovery of gunpowder lessened the horrors of war, and was in the interest of liberty and humanity. With its use decisive battles were fought with less slaughter of life, and the mailed knight could no longer strike terror into the hearts of scores of his enemies.

The mariner's compass became known to Western Europe about this period. As in the case of printing and gunpowder, the compass had been in use in China many centuries before this period. But unfortunately for the Chinese, they have been slow to acquaint other nations with their inventions and discoveries, as well as slow in accepting the inventions and discoveries of other nations. There is at least a probability that the use of the compass was among the treasures of knowledge brought back from China by Marco Polo, that pioneer traveler in the Far East, whose career was a real romance.

The use of the mariner's compass revolutionized navigation. The ships men build and the commerce they carry on in those ships have always been among the real tests of a nation's greatness. The Phenicians had been the navigators and discoverers of ancient times. Their ships had plowed well-nigh every

square mile of the Mediterranean Sea, and they had ventured outside its waters into the broader expanses of the Atlantic. But with their passing the bold spirit of maritime adventure also passed. The bold Vikings of the Far North roamed the seas for booty, ravaged the fair shores of Southern Europe, and pushed their adventurous prows across the Atlantic. But they added nothing to the world's knowledge and nothing to its civilization. Men dreamed of a fair Atlantis beyond the sea, but none were courageous enough to brave the perils of the great ocean to find it.

But with the compass, later the quadrant, and finally the chronometer, the great Atlantic, the far-off Pacific, and the tropic seas that laved the shores of distant India and China were no longer to terrify timid and ignorant men, but were to unlock their secrets and their treasures to adventurers in search of wealth and discoverers in search of knowledge. The Portuguese found their way around the Cape of Good Hope; Christopher Columbus, the Italian, with three small vessels under the Spanish flag, sailed across the Atlantic in 1492 and discovered America; and all Europe woke up to the fact that the world was larger than it had been dreamed of before. The discovery of the New World made a new world out of the Old World. After this men could never be the same. The lethargy of the centuries was gone, the sleep of ages was past. Men were as much startled as they would have been if the sun had flashed his first rays from the west instead of the east. Indeed, the day had come to the West, if not from the west.

The discovery of America was, like other discoveries in this age of marvelous transition, mightily conducive to a larger humanity as well as to a larger world. Many who crossed the Atlantic came only to rob and to murder and thus to enrich themselves with ill-gotten gold. But the God of all the earth overruled their covetousness and made them nation builders. And so through succeeding centuries light has shone back from the New World upon the Old World.

About the middle of the fifteenth century came possibly the greatest invention of that or any other age. This was the art of printing. It is not material as to who the real inventor was. The Dutch claim that the honor belongs to Laurens Coster; the Germans assert the rival claims of their countryman, John Gutenberg. Possibly both the German and the Hollander were independent and original inventors of the art.

It is impossible to measure and weigh the influence of the printing press. Think for a moment what the world was before the days of printing. There were no books except those that were written by hand. Bound volumes were rare, libraries rarer still, and thousands and tens of thousands lived and died without ever seeing a book. And newspapers were unknown. A family Bible, even if the Church of Rome had allowed the people access to the Word of God, would have been an impossible privilege to a poor man. But the evolution and revolution of this age of change and progress, so wonderful then, and more wonderful now, left as a part of its heritage to succeeding ages an invention that has transformed the world. While the art of

printing met the need of the centuries, it made imperative the need of the age of its invention for that moral and spiritual reformation which even then was finding its first foretokens in the lands where the first books, one of them a Bible, came from the rude press of those early times.

The invention of printing gave a mighty impulse to the revival of learning that had already begun—first in Italy, where centuries before the lamp of learning had gone out, and later still throughout Western Europe.

It must not be supposed that the Middle Ages were utterly destitute of learning and of scholars. On the contrary, there were many learned men among the priests and monks of those long centuries. The Church had been a jealous guardian of learning. And long before the period we are considering many universities had been founded in the different countries of Western Europe.

The university (it was called *studium generale* at first) seems to have had its origin first in France, and, like the schools of ancient Athens, had its beginnings in a nucleus of students who rallied around some noted scholar. Later Italy, afterwards England and Germany, and finally Spain, established these schools of largest scope, and many of them were ancient institutions in the days of Martin Luther.

But the scholarship of the Middle Ages was itself narrow. Its horizon was fixed by the *ipse dixit* of the pope. The Church fostered it and dominated it. Religiously it was an age of rites and rosaries, of masses

and missals, of ceremony and sacramentarianism. And the learning of the times was ruled and limited by the same spirit that ruled the Church. The Schoolmen were anxious to learn only that which others had learned. The old quite satisfied them. With them the Ultima Thule of scholastic attainment had been reached. Even if there were fields of undiscovered knowledge, why seek to explore them? The Inquisition awaited the propounder of a new theory or the finder of a new fact, if the theory or the fact contravened the accepted theories of Rome. The authority that pronounced the Copernican system heresy in after times had no strong Protestant opposition to contend with in those benighted centuries. Its dictum was absolute. The Roman Catholic Church has its schools and its scholars of great learning in many lands to-day, but these schools and scholars owe an unacknowledged debt to Protestantism for breaking off the fetters with which ancient Romanism bound its scholars and its schools. Of course the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages were not satisfied with the mere possession of what they knew; so they played hide and seek with the abstrusities of metaphysics, rang out the changes on the major and minor premises, and flattered their pride by knocking down imaginary windmills. A scholarship that honored the astrologer but tortured the astronomer; that was ready to accept the gold of the alchemist, if he had ever found any, but was ready to consider the discoveries of chemistry as the revelations of the devil; and that believed all the absurdities of witchcraft but refused to accept the Bible rather than the deliver-

ances of popes and councils—such a scholarship could bring little good to the scholar and less to his contemporaries.

The final overthrow of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 led to consequences quite outside the purpose of those greedy conquerors. Unwittingly they were helping to build up a civilization in the West which would ultimately overthrow their power in the East. This consummation has not yet come, but the Turk holds his place in Europe to-day by the sufferance of the very nations which centuries ago his ancestors sought to drive from their native lands, and by followers of the very religion which Mohammed sought to crush.

Many refugees from Constantinople sought a home in the West, and most of them settled in Italy. They brought with them a knowledge of the ancient Greek tongue. Rome had made the Latin tongue the language of the Church, also the language of the schools. Practically everything in the way of literature that was written for a thousand years was written in Latin. This had its advantages, and also it disadvantages. It gave all scholars access to all the literature of the several countries of Europe, but in turn restrained men from writing real literature. This is usually written in one's native tongue. The real literature of modern times began to be written when Dante and Petrarch and Boccaccio began to write in Italian, and Rabelais began to write in French, and Chaucer began to write in English. Göthe could not have

written "Faust" in English; Shakespeare could not have written "Hamlet" in German, and neither could have produced his masterpiece in Latin.

The new learning, for such it was to Western Europe, spread from Italy to all the nations adjacent, to Germany also, and to England as well. Its coming produced a freedom of thought and investigation that broke away from the old landmarks of faith and thought; and by reason of its very freedom it was calculated to turn men's resentment and rejection of the errors of Rome into disgust with all religion. Leo X. was a patron of the new learning, and he is credited with saying that "Christianity is a profitable fable."

The age called aloud for the saving power of the gospel. The nations needed the lesson of the golden rule. Discoverers going forth to add new continents to the knowledge of men needed to carry with them the knowledge of the true God, that they might impart that knowledge to heathen nations, and not the semi-paganism which substituted the worship of Roman images and saints for the worship of wooden idols or the worship of the sun. Gutenberg and Coster and their successors needed the whole truth of the divine Word in order that they might appreciate the printing press's wondrous power for good as well as for evil.

Macaulay expresses the opinion that the religion of the Middle Ages was better adapted than any other to the people of those times; that the rule of the popes was better than the rule of the cruel and unscrupulous kings and princes; and that the monastic life afforded a

needed retreat for scholars and monasteries a safe depository for the literature of the earlier times. This view may be accepted without lessening the force of our contention that a reformation was essential to the very life of the Church and to the perpetuity of Christianity.

The times had changed. The mind of the age was alive and alert. Men were thinking, and every thought was a question. The old wine skins were ready to burst. The new wine could not be poured into them with safety. To meet interrogation with denunciation, to answer a question as to faith with a so-called infallible dogma of a general council or a papal bull, to burn Wyclif's Bibles and John Huss's body—these were not the arguments that could satisfy the awakened mind of this awakened age or meet the quest of honest men who longed to know the way of life more perfectly.

But Rome did not know the times. With the blindness of Rehoboam and the madness of Pharaoh she refused to yield to the inevitable. Leo laughed at the trouble over the indulgences, and said it was "just a squabble among the monks." And as if all this was not enough, Rome added sin to folly. The fifteenth century, according to the testimony of all the authorities, was the darkest period in the history of the papacy. It was the age of the Borgias, and every respectable historian blushes as he records the doings of these human monsters. No wonder Martin Luther had not the slightest hesitation in calling the pope antichrist and found a literal fulfillment of the prophecy

in the second chapter of First Thessalonians in the pretensions of the pope, and saw the scarlet-robed "mother of harlots" in the Romish hierarchy.

The Reformation must come, and did come. And it was fit that it should find its earliest tangible manifestation in Germany. A thousand years before this the Germans had trodden under foot the power of ancient Rome. And Germany had never corrupted Christianity. Her people had accepted it as it had been brought to them. And Martin Luther was a German, honest, pure-blooded, and, like his Lord, one of the common people.

CHAPTER VIII.

Luther the Preacher.

There are epoch-marking and epoch-making events in the lives of individuals. There are such events in the history of nations; and in the annals of the race there have been days of destiny, after which the world was never the same as before. These crises are not always days; sometimes they are but moments. Sometimes they cover a series of events; often they are determined by a single act.

It is not difficult to find the epochs in Luther's life; and since his life affected so many other lives, it is not difficult to name in his history some of the great events in modern history. His visit to Rome was one of the pivotal facts in his life. He went to Rome a devout Catholic; he came away from there with less faith in Romanism, but with more faith in the Bible. In speaking of the matter afterwards, he said that the nearer one approached Rome, the sorrier Christians he found. It was a popular saying, he adds, that when a man went to Rome the first time he went in search of a knave, on his second visit he found him, and on his third visit he brought the knave away with him under his own clothes. Lately, however, men had become so clever that they brought the knave away with them the first time they went.

Luther did not return to Germany a knave or a skeptic, but he came back to his native land with a better understanding of that wonderful passage in

Romans, "The just shall live by faith," which he declared had been to him the gate to Paradise. The doctrine of salvation by faith was henceforth to be the thought of his life, the theme of his preaching, and the sum of his theology. At last he was finding that other fact in the gospel—men have a Saviour.

It has already been stated that Luther became a Doctor of Theology in 1512. This was no mere honorary degree such as colleges confer upon preachers these days. The Doctors of Divinity in those times studied for their degree, and were expected to be real teachers of divinity.

Luther did not seek this degree on his own motion. His friend Staupitz urged it upon him. He used to point out a pear tree in the courtyard of the monastery where he and Staupitz discussed the matter. He had been made subprior of his monastery, and it was his wish to give his whole attention to the duties of this position. Staupitz insisted that there was work to do in the Church that required young and strong men. Luther demurred upon the alleged ground that he was not strong in health and would not live long. Staupitz refused to accept this. Luther declared that he was too poor to meet the necessary expense. Staupitz answered that the elector would furnish the money. Luther still objecting, Staupitz met his reluctance by declaring that it was Luther's duty to do what Staupitz, his vicar-general, commanded. Luther always honored authority, and this last reason had a determining weight with him. He declared afterwards, in some of the troublous days that came to him,

that if he had known what was before him in consequence of this step, not ten horses could have dragged him into it.

Evidently Luther considered this doctor's degree as carrying with it more responsible duties than any he had assumed up to this time, though to us it would seem merely a fuller commitment of himself to work that he had already done in some sort before this. His hesitation in the matter did him no discredit, and by it he did not intentionally dishonor God. His quest for personal salvation had carried him into the monastic life; this step made him an officially authorized teacher of the way of salvation to others. From this place and work he drew back, not in rebellion, but because of a sense of unworthiness. It was the same spirit that made the prophet of old cry, "I am a man of unclean lips!" and that made Peter say to the Master: "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." In the kingdoms of this world men seek the office; in the kingdom of heaven the office seeks the man.

The interest Staupitz took in Luther is pathetic. The old vicar-general appreciated the worth and work of the young Saxon, and guided his faltering footsteps in the right way. But he could not follow his pupil in that way; the old faith was too strong on the old man. He went at last and ended his days in a convent. The fire he had unwittingly helped to kindle burned too brightly for his aged eyes.

It was in October, 1512, that Luther received his doctor's degree. He hesitated beforehand; but when

the decision was past, all hesitation was gone. Among the solemn pledges he took when he received his degree was one to defend the gospel with all his strength. The character of a vow depends always upon the character of the man who takes it. Others had taken this vow. To some of them it meant simply a solemn formality: to Luther it meant an obligation which ultimately made him the great reformer. In after times, when justifying his course in protesting against the errors of Romanism, he referred to the oath he had taken upon the Bible itself to defend it from all its foes.

The next five years of Luther's life were full of work. He instructed the monks in his monastery, he preached to the students, to the townspeople, and to the monks, and he lectured the classes on theology. He studied diligently, and gave the tremendous energies of his virile nature to the tasks that came with the days and the seasons; he presented soul and body a living sacrifice to his Master and to the Church. These years were the last stage of his preparation for the work that was to mark his life as one of the great lives in the world's history.

His lectures and sermons attracted wide attention. There was novelty in them. It was not the novelty of new truth, but the novelty of the old truths, long forgotten. He turned away from the methods and platitudes of the Schoolmen. He called no man master. The Word of God was his inspiration and his authority. He called the Church back to the Bible. This was the foundation and stronghold of his faith.

He sought to make it the faith of others. He had seen the Light, he had heard the Voice; following these, the way grew brighter and broader as he went onward.

Luther began his first lecture on the Psalms; and some of his earliest expositions are still preserved in manuscript. These first comments were crude, and show how much he learned in the course of time as he went on with his studies and lectures. Like the early fathers of the Church, he was disposed to give a spiritual interpretation to even the least important passage in the Songs of David and the other sacred poets. He found, or sought to find, Christ everywhere. This method of interpeting the Psalms, and especially some of the other books of the Old Testament, has led to some things that are so grotesque as interpretations that men of sense ought at once to have seen their absurdity. Luther learned better as he went on. Later he turned his attention to the epistles of the New Testament, especially Romans and Galatians. This last book became his lifelong favorite. He called it his Katharina Von Bora. His commentary on this epistle, which was the outgrowth of his lectures, is one of the classics of the Church. And his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans bore fruit centuries afterwards in its influence over a life that was little less epochal than his own.

On the 24th of May, 1738, John Wesley, almost heartbroken because of a sense of sin, went to a little Moravian meeting late at night. In this little gathering some one, whose name is not recorded, read from

Luther's preface to the book of Romans. As the reader read Luther's words about the nature of faith, and its necessity as the only condition of salvation, Wesley listened and wondered; and he tells us his experience in these memorable words: "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death, and I testified openly to all there what I then first felt in my heart."

And so the great reformer led the great revivalist to the understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith, and to an experience he himself had obtained two centuries before. And the two being dead, yet speak. And thus this doctrine, the despair of the Pharisee, the puzzle of the formalist, and the joy of the children of God, was the key that opened the kingdom to Paul the apostle, Luther the reformer, and Wesley the revivalist.

Luther's preaching and lectures clarified and crystallized his convictions. It is one thing to know divine things by experience; it is another thing to be able so to formulate these truths as to impart them to others. Luther knew by experience, as well as by the Bible, that men are saved by faith and faith alone. With this truth as a starting point, he went out in search of all other truths that helped to establish this cardinal doctrine of his creed and his experience. And he was quite prepared to reject everything as utterly false that in the least, by implication or inference, contradicted

this doctrine. He sought to understand and explain the nature of the law on one hand, and grace on the other. He soon saw that law is inflexible. It does not and cannot, in the very nature of things, make provision for pardon; its demand is for perfect obedience. Violation of one law cannot be atoned for by obedience to another law. Violation at one time cannot be expiated by obedience at another time. Violation of the law of God by one individual cannot be met by the obedience of another individual. Since all men have violated the moral law as well as the law of love, and since men cannot naturally keep the law of God, the way of salvation must be found in grace. Good works were not the condition of justification; they were the fruits of justification. The sinner must be justified before his works could be justified. The tree bore the fruit, and not the fruit the tree. Christ died for men. Faith in his atoning mercy was the one essential condition of salvation. Luther, as we have already said, was much influenced in his beliefs by the writings of St. Augustine, but he did not follow the teachings of the old father in a blind, unquestioning way.

This was well. If Luther had accepted all that St. Augustine taught, especially with reference to the doctrine of justification by faith, he would never have been the great reformer. The seeds of the great Reformation were not in Augustinianism. Augustine taught a doctrine of justification but it was not the doctrine of St. Paul nor of Martin Luther. Augustine believed that there was an infusion of righteousness, a

divine impartation of worthiness, before the sinner exercised justifying faith. With this imparted righteousness the sinner could not only believe, he could also do all that was required, and even more. According to this teaching, there was no righteousness of faith, but rather the faith of righteousness. The sinner paid his debt with currency freely furnished and stamped as genuine by the divine Creditor. This involved no pardon at all; it was a *quid pro quo* transaction. This doctrine involved, at least logically, several notions, no one of which Luther accepted unreservedly.

Among others it carried with it the doctrine of predestination. This belief, which was a modified form of ancient fatalism, colored Luther's views touching human free agency. He was not fully prepared to accept the freedom of the will as true. But his own consciousness of sin and of pardon, and his deep sense of personal responsibility, did not allow him to give such adhesion to the teachings of Augustine on this point as to cause him to give it a conspicuous place in his creed.

The belief in the possibility of works of supererogation was one of the germs of Augustinism. And the germ had borne abundant fruit in Romanism. Its harvest had added greatly to the spiritual capital of the popes, and no part of the papal assets had been more profitable. It brought ready cash in the market every time and everywhere. About this time the exigencies of the papacy became so great that a large stock of this spiritual commodity was offered for sale,

and at a price that was so reasonable that even poor people could purchase it. It was also offered at auction at an upset price. If Luther had believed this particular part of Augustine's teachings, he might have had the sale of indulgences so zealously exploited by John Tetzel a little while after this; and some of his enemies, David Hume among them, have asserted that the reason for his indignation against the indulgences was anger, forsooth, that he and his order were not allowed to sell them.

Antinomianism was likewise a part of the logic of Augustine's view of justification. Luther never for one moment gave credence to this belief. He did not understand nor teach that faith is a substitute for obedience to the law of God; faith he regarded as the condition of pardon for disobedience. He believed that guilt grew out of disobedience, and nothing but pardon could remove guilt. This pardon was offered to men through the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

In the following words Luther tells his experience in connection with the doctrine of salvation by faith:

> Though as a monk I was holy and irreproachable, my conscience was still filled with troubles and torments. I could not endure the expression, "the righteous justice of God." I did not love the just and holy Being who punishes sinners. I felt a secret rage against him. I hated him because, not satisfied with torturing by his law and the miseries of life poor sinners already ruined by original sin, he aggravated our sufferings by the gospel. But when by the Spirit of God I understood these words [he refers to Romans i. 17], when I learned that the justification of the sinner proceeds from the mercy of God by way of faith, then I felt myself born again as a new man, and I entered by an opened door into the very

paradise of God. From that hour I saw the precious and holy Scriptures with new eyes. I went through the whole Bible. . . . Truly this text of St. Paul's was to me as the very gate to heaven.

There is potential martyrdom in a conviction and experience like this, and there is prophecy in it as well. Whenever the Holy Spirit writes a truth like this upon a human soul, and in such letters as those written upon Martin Luther's conscience, he serves notice by the writing that the man must stand for the truth thus written, will have to suffer for this truth, and may have to die for it; and no man is prepared to go forth as a soldier of the King who is not armed with such convictions. The iron had entered Luther's soul. The test of his faith and his fidelity was at hand, and he did not waver. The honesty of soul that made him a monk and a true servant of the Church, under a Guidance to which he had never been disloyal, was soon to find for him the full meaning of the experience that had come to him, and the real work for which his life from his childhood up had been but a preparation.

But Luther did not know all this. It was well that he did not. Such knowledge would have hindered the preparation, if it had not rendered it utterly abortive. Luther was still a zealous Romanist. He discarded and denounced many of the silly traditions of the Church, rejected the invocation of saints for temporal blessings, and called in question such things as did not commend themselves to his judgment and seemed to contradict his cherished doctrine of salvation by faith. He did not have the least doubt in his mind as to the

infallibility of the Church. The scales had not yet fallen from his eyes. He had not yet learned that Romanism is not founded upon the Bible. He believed in the Church because he believed in the Bible. He was ready to condemn what he considered as the heresies of the martyr-reformer, John Huss. He used against Huss the very arguments that were afterwards used against himself. He had been appointed vicar of the Augustine monasteries in Thuringia, eleven in number, and he visited these regularly in his official capacity. Meanwhile his teachings with reference to salvation by faith alone were making no small stir among the German scholars and ecclesiastics. He modestly called it Augustinianism, but it was really Protestantism. Men of learning gave him their friendship. George Spalatin, chaplain to the elector, and who had been a college mate at Erfurt, helped to gain for him the favor of the wise Frederick. John Reuchlin, the greatest Hebrew scholar of the age and the author of the first grammar of the Hebrew language, admired him, and to him Luther was much indebted for preparing the way for the Reformation by what he wrote concerning the Rabbins. And Erasmus, the leader of the Humanists, heard of him and appreciated his worth and work.

In 1516 Martin Luther began to use the printing press for the dissemination of his teachings, a means he found mightily helpful in his after work. In his reading he had found the sermons of the mystic Tauler, who lived in the fourteenth century. These sermons, like other things he read, helped him; but

the man's independence of thought and conviction saved him from following slavishly this man, or any other man. A little tract by Tauler, which Luther called "The German Theology," was the first publication in German that Luther ever gave to the world to which was attached his own name. A little while after this he issued a commentary on the seven penitential Psalms. This was really the first of his own writings to see the light through the medium of the printed page. His own experience helped him to expound these ancient prayers.

And all the time he was preaching almost every day, and often thrice a day.

CHAPTER IX.

Luther's Theses.

The year 1517 had come. Martin Luther was in the prime of his middle manhood. He had won his degrees. He had gained his footing in the world of scholarship. He was a trusted leader of the Augustine order. He was a faithful servant of the Church. He had for himself settled theoretically and experimentally the fundamental doctrine of salvation by faith. He had helped others with his preaching, and some had died in peace because they embraced salvation under his instruction. He had sown the seeds of the great Reformation, which, like thistledown, had been borne upon the winds to unexpected places. Without conscious premonition he was approaching the crisis of his life.

The sale of indulgences in Germany aroused him from what might have been the lifelong, peaceful sleep of a loyal Romanist. The bellowing of the monk Tetzel startled him into wakefulness.

Leo X. had succeeded the war-loving Julius upon the papal throne. He was more pacific than his predecessor, and much more decent than Alexander. He loved learning, encouraged the fine arts, and was in sympathy with the advancing enlightenment of the age. But he was at heart a skeptic, and needed money to finish St. Peter's Church. Jesus was a "fable;" he had no faith in him himself. Others did, however, and he would turn their credulity into cash. He wished

to complete St. Peter's; it would be a monument to Italian art. The Church had taught its votaries to believe in popish and priestly absolution; he would turn that teaching to account. He would sell indulgences. It would be really more humane to allow poor wretches who believed they had sinned to pay a sum of money, large or small, according to their means, rather than to do the hard penance attached to priestly absolution, or, finally, endure the pains of purgatory throughout countless ages. And so money would flow abundantly into the papal treasury, and St. Peter's could be completed.

The doctrine of indulgences was not new to the Church. Like so many other features of Romanism, it was a corruption of apostolic custom. The early Church was rigid in the enforcement of discipline. This fact comes out in the case for which the apostle reproves the Corinthians in his first epistle to them, and in his appeal for mercy to the party involved in the second epistle.

Expulsion from membership was not infrequent when the needs of discipline required it, but this was the extreme penalty. The early Church claimed no right to go farther than this. And then, and now, the Church has never had the right to do more than this in the enforcement of penalty. Sometimes the punishment went no farther than suspension. In all such cases, and in the case of expulsion itself, if the guilty party evinced genuine penitence, there was a remission of the penalty and he was restored to membership. The apostles and the apostolic Church never claimed

the authority to forgive sins or to enforce any sort of punishment after death, purgatorial or otherwise. In the course of time, as the popes of Rome began to add to their power and assumed all the executive and judicial prerogatives of the ecclesiastical body, and as the doctrine of purgatory was adopted by the Church, originating most probably in the Persian worship of fire, the popes claimed the right to remit temporal penalties, and finally to relieve from purgatorial punishment. This remission was what was called an "indulgence." This indulgence freed the recipient from penance, and came in time to be accepted as freeing the dead from purgatory itself, or at least shortening their stay in this place or state of supposed purging from all that is sinful. The next step was easy enough: penance and purgatorial fires found commutation in the payment of a prescribed sum of money to the pope or his authorized agents. For many years before the time of Martin Luther indulgences had been granted upon certain conditions, such as the visiting of sacred places, or doing certain ritualistic things, such as crawling on one's knees up Pilate's staircase at Rome and the like. It must be said to the credit of Leo X. that he did not originate the sale of indulgences; he simply carried the business farther than any of his predecessors had done. It is possible, too, that he may have claimed greater merit for the indulgences sold under his direction than any previously placed on the market. Here is an authentic copy of the indulgences sold by the monk Tetzel by the thousands in Germany at the beginning of the great Reformation:

Our Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on thee [here the name of the purchaser was inserted] and absolve thee by the merits of his most holy sufferings! And I, in virtue of the apostolic power committed unto me, absolve thee from all ecclesiastical censures, judgments, and penalties thou mayest have merited; and, further, from all excesses, sins, and crimes thou mayest have committed, however great and enormous they may be and of whatever kind, even though they should be reserved to our holy father, the pope, and to the apostolic see. I efface all the stains of weakness and all traces of the shame thou mayest have drawn upon thyself by such actions. I remit the pain thou wouldst have had to endure in purgatory. I receive thee again to the sacraments of the Church. I hereby reincorporate thee in the body of the saints, and restore thee to the innocence and purity of thy baptism, so that at the moment of thy death the gate to the place of torment shall be closed against thee and the gate to the paradise of joy shall be opened unto thee. And if thou shouldst live long, the grace continueth unchangeable till the time of thy end. In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. The brother, John Tetzel, Commissary, hath signed this with his own hand.

This precious document was most assuredly a "plenary indulgence." It pardoned all sins, past, present, and to come. It released from all penalty, ecclesiastical, purgatorial, and heavenly. By a single stroke of the pen it made a Christian out of a thief, a murderer, or a blasphemer. It virtually abrogated all law, human and divine. It closed the gates of hell forever against the vilest sinner who paid for it. It opened wide the gates of heaven to the most abandoned wretch who would chink the change into Tetzel's money box.

Surely no being but the devil himself ever before

or since ventured to speak or write such unspeakable profanity. And all this in the name of the holy Catholic Church! And, worse still, in the name of the Holy Trinity!

Catholic writers admit now that there were abuses in connection with the sale of these indulgences. But Rome has never officially repudiated these indulgences nor the profane mountebank who sold them in the Catholic Churches under papal authority. And it was because Luther appealed to the pope to stop the sale of these indulgences that he was put under the ban of the Church, and escaped the stake only because the papacy could not lay its vengeful hands upon him. And because others since then have believed as Luther did, and have refused to bow the knee to the Roman pontiff and the Romish power, they have faced the Inquisition and the fires of martyrdom; and "semper idem" is the proud boast of Rome. It was reserved for the nineteenth century for a general council to declare that the successors to the infidel, Leo X., are infallible. Leo, then, must have been infallible.

Possibly the conclusion reached in the preceding sentence may be too hasty. Let us see. Is the pope of Rome infallible *ex officio,* or was he made infallible by a decree of the General Council? Did the council that sat in 1870 make Pius IX. infallible, or did it merely recognize a preëxistent fact? If papal infallibility depends upon the decree of a council, then the council must be infallible; but if an infallible council makes an infallible papacy, does it not part with its own infallibility? Is it infallible when it thus surrenders its own

infallibility? If a general council is ever infallible, is it not forever infallible? If it is not infallible always, is it infallible at any time? Since a general council cannot make an infallible pope without surrendering its own infallibility and thus proving that it is not infallible at all, then the pope of Rome is essentially infallible. If this reasoning be correct, then Leo was infallible, Alexander Borgia was infallible, and the female who is said to have occupied the papal chair for a time, becoming a mother while pope, was infallible. Then since the popes are said to be infallible when they set forth the doctrines of the Church, and since Leo X. was announcing a doctrine of the Church when he authorized the sale of indulgences, and since one infallible pope cannot contradict another infallible pope, it would be highly inconsistent for the Romish hierarchy to condemn or disclaim the action of Leo in throwing these indulgences on the market. An infallibility that changes with every occupant of the chair of St. Peter would not be consistent with itself. Some things are suggested to the mind by contrast, and when studying this matter of the sale of indulgences one is apt to think of the case of Simon Magus, the sorcerer, who offered Simon Peter money for the power to bestow the Holy Ghost upon men by the laying on of hands, and Peter's answer: "Thy money perish with thee!" But the infallible Leo could quite easily reverse the fallible Peter (no general council had elected Peter pope) and accept the money that came to him from his duly authorized agent, John Tetzel.

But the story of these indulgences has not all been told. They were not merely efficacious in the case of the living by reason of the fact that they secured pardon from all sin, past, present, and future, and assured the ultimate salvation of those who bought them; they availed even for the dead. Tetzel, with the skill of the modern spellbinder, appealed pathetically to the living in behalf of the dead. Fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, children and grandparents were in purgatory. Back from this spiritual limbo they cried out for help to their earthly relatives: "You can help us, and you will not!" And then the veracious Tetzel would exclaim: "These imprisoned souls, your loved ones, will fly away to heaven just as soon as the money rattles in the box!"

And of course the money rained into the hands of this trusted servant of the pope and the Church. What mattered it if he was a bit loose in his morals? No sinner could bestow divine pardon upon other sinners, since he, "in virtue of the power vested in him," was forgiving sinners right and left, and was anxious to forgive all who would pay the price of pardon, he was, in the very nature of things, not amenable to the law of God or man, and could go into taverns and drink to drunkenness and indulge his lust in houses of ill fame. True, such conduct had been specially forbidden by those who had given him his authority, but these higher officials could not take away from him with the left hand what they had given him with the right. Was he not earning honest money for the Church? Was he not preparing a shelter for the bones of the holy

apostles? Did he not earn all he received? Was he not morally immune? He would go where he pleased and do what he pleased. He was spending his own money.

Back of Tetzel in the sale of these indulgences was Albert, Archbishop of Mayence and Magdeburg. Wittenberg itself was in Albert's diocese, and he was therefore Martin Luther's superior, to whom he was of course responsible. At twenty-seven Albert had reached this high office. His early promotion had fostered his natural ambition. When he was made archbishop he had paid, as others had done, a good price for his office, which he of course received from the pope. This price was covered up by a little piece of fiction. When a priest was made an archbishop he received a pallium. This insignia of office is worn by the pope all the time, but the archbishop wears it only on state occasions. It is a band for the neck woven of white lamb's wool, with black embroidered crosses with bands attached, one hanging down in front and the other down the back. Albert paid thirty thousand gulden, approximately twelve thousand dollars, for this inexpensive regalia. Catholic writers claim that the pope does not really sell these pallia, but that what unsophisticated people would call a price demanded and received is only a contribution to the pope.

This papal paraphernalia is supposed to have some resemblance to the breastplate worn by the Jewish high priests, and to remind its wearers of the interest the Great Shepherd takes in his flock, and consequently the interest the undershepherds should take. One

critically disposed might think this fragmentary garment had the quality of antithetic suggestion and inspiration, but of course such conjectures as this are out of place in sober history.

Albert was a man of princely blood and princely pretensions. He kept a royal retinue about him. His court was kingly. Poverty and beggary are quite good enough for monks and friars, but popes and Romish dignitaries seem not to have regarded it as specially needful in their moral equipment. The overrighteousness of the mendicant orders added to the stock in trade of the Church. It furnished a part of the basis upon which indulgences were issued to specially needy and willing sinners. Albert did not have the money to pay for his pallium and to meet the necessary expenses of his way of living, so he had recourse to the money lenders. The Messrs. Fugger, the Rothschilds of the sixteenth century, accommodated him. But men who lend money usually expect to be reimbursed, and young Albert found himself hampered and handicapped with debts and the importunities of creditors. A happy thought came to him: he would strike a bargain with the pope by which he would be allowed to have a monoply of the sale of indulgences in Germany. He would pay the pope half of the proceeds, and his own half, after deducting the necessary expense of the business, would pay his debts. A scheme that carried such liberal profits to the pope, such pecuniary profits to himself, and such moral profits to the people commended itself at once to his judgment. Only one other thing was needed: he must

find a man who could push the business successfully. And he found the man. The individual intrusted with this matter was the Dominican monk, John Tetzel.

This historic individual was the son of a jeweler, and was born at Leipsic near the middle of the fifteenth century. He was therefore well advanced in years when he was placed in the responsible position of selling indulgences. He was well fitted by character and capacity for his work. He was an orator, he was full of energy, and he had lived a vicious life. He was the father of a large family of illegitimate children, one of whom he carried with him openly on his rounds. On one occasion he had barely escaped being thrown into the Elbe for some of his misdoings. He was just the man Albert needed.

Tetzel's progress from place to place was like the journeyings of a king. A cavalcade accompanied him. When he approached a city or town, civil and ecclesiastical officials went out to meet him, together with a great company of men and women and children. With these he entered a church. A red cross was set up near the altar, draped with a banner bearing the papal arms. Close by was a strong iron chest for the money. Tetzel held forth daily. He pleaded, he cajoled, he denounced, and all the while did a thriving business. Accompanying him were the agents of the Messrs. Fugger, ready to collect their share of the archbishop's portion and apply it to his debts. The iron chest was constantly echoing with the sound of silver as it dropped from the hands of ready purchasers of indulgences. Sometimes the coin was gold. There was

a regular schedule of prices. Pardon for some kinds of sin came higher than others. Six ducats were demanded for the sin of adultery. The collection box grew heavier as the consciences and pockets of guilty sinners grew lighter. Tetzel had a brow of brass. He bellowed, he roared, he thundered. Men trembled with fear of purgatory, and came down with the cash.

Modern Catholic writers have admitted that great abuses and irregularities accompanied the sale of indulgences at this time, and the faithful and zealous Tetzel was even in his lifetime made the scapegoat of the infamous system. The Roman legate sharply rebuked him for his misconduct, he was threatened with the displeasure of the pope, and he was retired to an out-of-the-way monastery. And then the most creditable fact in his whole history took place—he actually died of a broken heart. Meanwhile the Romish hierarchy has never even unto this day disgorged any of the cash that Tetzel obtained wrongfully, as was claimed at the time—that is, by going beyond his instructions in the sale of indulgences. Possibly it might be impertinent to inquire where the pope of Rome got his right to sell or grant indulgences. The contention of Martin Luther that he did not have this authority was the onus of his guilt, according to the judgment of the Romish power. Very naturally popes do not like to have their authority questioned. Are they not infallible?

Of course there were good men in the Catholic Church at this time, as there have always been, and these were grieved by this wholesale barter of indul-

gences. Naturally they asked: "Does God love money better than he loves souls? Why does the pope condition the release of a soul from purgatory upon the payment of a piece of money? Is this merciful?"

This sale of indulgences had its grotesquely humorous side. Sometimes the Church was made to suffer in its revenues by a perfectly logical conclusion on the part of those who purchased these letters of release. The wife of a shoemaker had bought one of these documents against her husband's will. Some time afterwards she died. Her husband buried her without asking the priest to say mass for her. The priest complained to the magistrate, and the husband was brought before the civil officer.

"Is your wife dead?" asked the magistrate.

"Yes, sir," answered the husband.

"Why did you have her buried without a mass?"

The shoemaker produced the indulgence. "If this does not free her from purgatory, then the holy father has defrauded me. If it does, then the priest is trying to deceive me."

This logic satisfied the magistrate, but possibly not the priest, and the shoemaker went his way.

Tetzel himself was made to feel as well as see this same logic. On one occasion he had harangued the people in his usual loud-mouthed way, when a Saxon gentleman came up to him and asked: "Can you grant me an indulgence that will take the sin out of an act that I am anxious to do?"

The enterprising but unsuspecting Tetzel assured him that he could.

"Well," said the gentleman, "I have an enemy that I am exceedingly anxious to punish. I do not wish to kill him, but I wish to punish him severely. I will give you ten crowns if you will give me the indulgence I want."

Tetzel, with the true instinct of a trader, saw that the gentleman was unusually anxious for the desired paper, so he demanded more than the gentleman had offered. Finally a bargain was struck for thirty crowns.

Later, when Tetzel and his party took their journey to another town, this Saxon gentleman waylaid him with his servants, and gave Tetzel a flogging such as he had hardly received in all his life, and the precious money box was also taken from him. Afterwards, when Tetzel complained to a magistrate and the party who had administered the castigation was brought to trial, he exhibited the indulgence he had received from Tetzel and the case was dismissed.

All Germany was talking about these indulgences. They were handed about like bank bills. Accounts at taverns were settled with them. They were used as stakes in games of chance by Tetzel and his companions. Among the superstitious (and Rome has never taken many pains to save a people from superstition) they found ready sale and ready credence. But some mocked, others scoffed at the Church itself, and the most sacred things and names were brought into open contempt. Meanwhile the great good sense of the German people saved them from a full and unqualified acceptance of all the consequences of this ecclesiastically inspired anarchy.

Luther heard about Tetzel and his work. "God willing," he said, "I'll punch a hole in that drum."

The Elector Frederick would not allow Tetzel to enter his territory. He did not utterly discredit the doctrine of indulgences himself; in fact, he had received some such concessions from the pope in connection with some of the relics he had gathered at Wittenberg; but he was not prepared to allow his people to be mulcted wholesale by Tetzel. And no doubt there was personal interest in his effort to save his little kingdom from this tax. But Tetzel was not to be outdone in this way. He came with his stock of indulgences and his money box and opened up business in a town close to the borders of Saxony. Some of the people of Wittenberg went thither and bought indulgences. Afterwards some of them came to Luther and made confession in the usual way. They acknowledged that they had committed heinous sins, but when Luther urged them to repent they declared that they proposed to continue to practice these same sins. Luther, astonished, indignantly demanded their reason. Then they produced the indulgences they had bought from Tetzel. Luther denounced these indulgences, and warned those who held them and relied on them that they were worth nothing, and that if they persisted in their sins they would certainly be lost. The words of Luther were carried back to Tetzel by some of those who had bought indulgences, and that blatant individual used severe language about any one who would dare to question the validity of his indulgences. He had fires made in the public square of the town, and

asserted with great emphasis that he was authorized by the pope to burn heretics.

"I was a young doctor," said Luther, "just from the anvil," and the zeal of this young doctor made him eager not merely for a fray with Tetzel, but, what was better, to take up the cudgels in defense of the Church.

Luther was unwilling to believe that the pope indorsed such things as were done by Tetzel, or that the Church generally indorsed them. The governing principle of his life was to stand for whatever he believed to be true. He stood for the Church because he believed the Church stood for the truth. It was his discovery that the Church of his times stood for what he was sure was not true—a discovery which was forced upon him in a most disagreeable way—that ultimately drove him from the Romish Church.

He called attention to Tetzel and his doings in letters to various bishops and dignitaries of the Church. Some of them laughed at him, others expressed sympathy with his views, but none were ready to join him in any definite effort to arrest the evil. All were afraid of the Romish hierarchy. And well might prudent men tremble before a power that, humanly speaking, seemed well-nigh omnipotent, and that was as unscrupulous as mighty.

Luther determined to strike for the truth and for the Church. The feast of All Saints was approaching. Many would come to Wittenberg for the occasion. He did not consult any of his friends, and did not even tell them what he proposed to do. Sometimes it is best

to confer with flesh and blood; sometimes it is not. Many times our friends help us; sometimes they do not.

On the thirty-first day of October, 1517, Martin Luther posted his ninety-five theses on the door of the church in Wittenberg. It is a day to be remembered. It registered the beginning of a new calendar in the Christian world.

These theses seem to us mild in tone and contents, but at the time they were bold, defiant deliverances. They asserted some things with much emphasis. The pope had no right to remove any but ecclesiastical penalties. Repentance was more than penance. It was an inward sorrow for sin and an outward change of life. Those who trusted indulgences for salvation would go to the devil along with those who sold them. Indulgences could not possibly benefit the dead. The mercies of Christ were alike for all. The purchase of indulgences was not better than charity. The pope would rather that St. Peter's Church were burned down than that it should be built at the expense of other charities. The pope had no more scriptural power in the matter of pardon than every other priest or curate. Those who sold indulgences were doing the work of antichrist. The pope must be reverenced. He was misrepresented by those who sold indulgences. All honor to the pope and the Church!

Luther did not put these theses forth as assertions or dogmas; he simply set them forth as contentions for which he would be willing to meet any one in open discussion. This was a common custom in those times.

In the preamble he announces that he will argue these propositions with any one that might wish to meet him. And if any who could not come to Wittenberg in person wished to discuss them, such a disputant was invited to written debate.

It is worth while to state that there was nothing new or radical in these theses. Substantially everything claimed in them had been asserted and maintained by others. The great objection to them, and that which made their writing an unpardonable offense, was that they endangered the revenues of the pope.

The night before these theses were posted on the door of the Wittenberg church, the wise Frederick dreamed a strange dream. In his vision he saw a monk writing something on the door of the church at Wittenberg, using a pen whose staff reached to the city of Rome. This staff could not be broken, though it scraped the very ears of the pope, and all the dignitaries of the Church sought to break it. And there were other pens; and as they wrote all Europe was in an uproar. Then the good prince awoke in a fright, and the next morning he told his dream to his companions at breakfast; and all wondered what this strange dream might mean. Some of them lived long enough to see history interpret its meaning.

Frederick dreamed that this wonder-working pen was made from a feather plucked from a Bohemian goose a hundred years old!

CHAPTER X.

Luther Defends His Theses—The Reformation Begins.

Luther's ninety-five theses created a great commotion. The sensation was widespread. In two weeks they had been translated from the Latin in which Luther wrote them into German, and had spread all over Germany. The very winds of the early winter seemed to scatter them throughout the land. In those days, when men and news traveled slowly, it was wonderful how the theses were carried from city to city and town to town and hamlet to hamlet. Like the leaves of the passing autumn they fell upon the pathways of the people. But they were not dead leaves; they were rather the seeds of a new life. They were borne across the Alps, and were laid at the very gates of the Vatican.

Luther found himself suddenly famous. The recluse of the monastery had all at once become the most-talked-about man in Europe. Many praised him, others abused him, and all wondered whereunto this thing would grow. Leo, the courteous skeptic who occupied the papal chair, treated the matter liberally and humorously at first. He was disposed to think that too much learning had made the German doctor mad. Later, when the matter attained proportions that no one at first dreamed of, he spoke more severely. These were the words of a drunken German,

he said; when the man sobered up he would think better of the matter. By and by the lion began to roar, and nothing but an overruling Providence saved the poor monk from his jaws.

The masses of the people hailed the theses with delight. They praised a man who had the courage to speak out against the impostures and impositions of Rome. Silent men are not always submissive to authority and oppression. Nature does not always announce the coming storm. The earthquake comes without foretokens. Beasts often feel its tremor and hear its rumblings before men do. Rome did not hear the mutterings of the earthquake and the storm. She did not dream that the very silence that followed the death of brave John Huss, martyred by her treachery, was ominous and presaged a mighty social convulsion. Drunk with wealth and power and the blood of the saints, she knew nothing, saw nothing, heard nothing, cared for nothing except that which ministered to her avarice, gratified her ambition, and satiated her vengeful, persecuting spirit. Borrowing the garb of Christianity, she embodied the soul of Nero; and claiming to represent the Prince of Peace, she perpetuated the spirit of the ancient gladiator. She had soothed the consciences of men with her fatal opiates, and did not realize that the effects of the drug had worn off and that "neither poppy nor mandagora would medicine them to their sweet sleep of yesterday." No delusion is so great as the delusion of sinful security.

No one was more surprised at all this furor than was Martin Luther himself. He had not meant to defy

the Church; he had meant to defend it. The theses were in no sense a popular pronunciamento. They were written in Latin; and the people generally did not know Latin. They were couched not in common phrases, but in the phraseology of the schools. They asserted nothing absolutely; they simply challenged discussion. Their motive was not dogmatic egotism, but the loyalty of a true man, who loved his Church, the truth, and his Lord. At first Luther felt strangely. Like a daring soldier, he had ventured far in advance of his companions, and was not sure that his fellow-soldiers would follow him. He could not go back; to go forward might mean death, and death has its terrors for all sane men. Once he had sought the monastery to find his Lord; now he had found him in that fearful solitude which comes to a man who stands alone in a great cause. Men do not need to hide from the world to know this seclusion of soul. It is found rather in the thick of the fight and in the center of the multitude. The solitude of the cloister had prepared him for this solitude of spirit in the midst of the throngs about him. He examined himself afresh, as well as scrutinized anew the position he had taken. He was sure that he had found the Saviour, and found him, not in priestly confession and absolution, but in his Word. He was assured that what he had taught and believed was in full accord with the Bible, and he was assured that God was with him. Thus assured, he stood forth armed and equipped for the battle before him. But he did not yet know how sore the battle would be.

He did not rush recklessly into the conflict. Those who stand for conscientious convictions are generally more cautious than those who are inspired by prejudice, false judgment, or self-interest. The aggressiveness of Luther's nature was not yet in full action. He was not fully acquainted with himself. He never turned back, and as he went forward he developed the strength of character that had hitherto lain dormant. The giant was at last awake, and no false Delilah had shorn his locks while he slept.

On the day after the posting of the theses Luther preached very earnestly to his people. He warned them against trusting in indulgences. He told them that he had no power to save them. Only Jesus could do that. They must look to him.

For many months after Luther had openly assumed his attitude toward the question of indulgences his attitude toward his ecclesiastical superiors was thoroughly loyal. He wrote most respectfully to the archbishop, stating his case and making his appeal that the sale of indulgences might be discontinued. Of course this appeal accomplished nothing. How could it? He sent a copy of his theses to Leo with a most humble and reverential letter. But in his letter he did not retract anything he had written, nor did he recant anything he said at any time anywhere. His enemies have said that his course provoked an unnecessary schism in the Church; that but for his haste the reforms he pleaded for would have come in the course of time; and that therefore he really retarded the growth of those principles for which he contended.

In this connection it cannot be stated with too much emphasis that Luther's first appeals were to the Church. The only answer he received was reprimand, rebuke, and ultimate excommunication, followed by centuries of malicious abuse heaped upon his name and memory. No lie has been too black, no slander too foul, and no curse too bitter for Catholic slanderers of Martin Luther. To this very day Roman Catholic priests teach their flocks to hate the name of Luther, and to perpetuate falsehoods which they know, or should know, are the grossest misrepresentations. Unfortunately the Romish Church has held too tenaciously to the Jesuitical doctrine that falsehood can be used innocently in defending the truth.

Luther, as we have said, did not understand the full meaning of the position he had taken. He admits that he did not know all that was in the indulgences, and he felt a little strangely. "The tune was too high," he said; he couldn't reach it with his voice. But his enemies understood the doctrine of indulgences, and the logic of that doctrine, and they picked up the gauntlet he had thrown down. They forced the real issue to the front, and forced him to meet it. This issue resolves itself into a simple syllogism: The pope has authorized the sale of indulgences; but the pope is infallible; therefore the sale of indulgences is right. Luther at this time had disputed only the conclusion; he had not rejected the premises. But he could not doubt the conclusion and at the same time admit the truth of the premises; so in the course of time he refused to accept the premises, and thus he became a Protestant.

As a matter of fact, Luther had never fully accepted the doctrine of papal infallibility. In this he was not peculiar. That doctrine was not then a formulated dogma of the Church. If the doctrine did not originate with Thomas Aquinas, who lived in the thirteenth century, and who did more than almost any other scholastic writer to give systematic shape to the doctrines of the Catholic Church, it at least had in him its most strenuous advocate. Luther believed in the supreme authority of the Church, and in this sense its infallibility, but he believed that this authority was not vested in the pope alone, but in the general councils as well. For three centuries and a half after Martin Luther was confronted with this question of papal infallibility it was an unsettled matter in the Romish Church. Into all the ins and outs of Jansenism and Ultramontanism we need not go. It is enough to say that after the Reformation the issue was more than an academic question. Papal infallibility, according to modern Catholics, is a very harmless looking doctrine. They claim that it means simply that the pope is a court of final resort; that every body, ecclesiastical and civil, must have a supreme judicatory, and that the pope's functions are of this nature. This is not the papal infallibility of Thomas Aquinas, but a sort of afterthought designed to give the dogma a semblance of justification. According to the belief of the Middle Ages and of those who engaged in the controversy with Martin Luther, papal infallibility meant that the pope could do no wrong. And this, to an unsophisticated mind, is the only consistent view of

the doctrine. Two questions asked in another connection may be repeated here: If the pope is not infallible always and in all things, when and in what is he infallible? If he is not infallible in all things and at all times, is he infallible at all? To say that he is infallible when speaking *ex cathedra* would seem to make the "seat," and not the man, infallible.

Martin Luther, as we shall see, was forced finally to reject the infallibility of the pope, general councils, and the infallibility of even the Church itself, and to find infallibility in the Bible alone.

The first to take up the controversy against Luther was the redoubtable Tetzel himself. Assisted by one Conrad Wimpina, he set forth two sets of theses in defense of indulgences. Immediately upon their publication the University of Frankfort-on-the-Oder made him doctor in theology, thus espousing his cause, and the erstwhile seller of papal pardons held a learned disputation on the question involved. It is easy to imagine, if we did not know otherwise, what his contention would be. The pope was virtually the Church. What he said must be accepted by all Christians as authoritative—as authoritative as the Bible itself. Those who opposed the pope were heretics, and were already excommunicated. If they did not recant in a reasonable time they were worthy of the severest penalties. If the pope and the Church were not authoritative in matters of faith, then every man could and would believe only what was pleasing to himself. Then there would be as many heads of the Church as there were individuals.

This last statement contains the essence of an oft repeated criticism of Protestantism. And unfortunately Protestants themselves have sometimes borrowed this argument from Romanists and used it against other Protestants. Intolerance and persecution have come from this source. There are at least two errors in it. No Church, popish or Protestant, has ever had the divinely given right of prescription and proscription as to the faith of men. Every Church stands, or should stand, for what it believes, and it has the right to demand that its members should at least outwardly respect its creed; but it has no authority to say that all men, or any man, shall accept without question what it teaches. The other error is that it has been supposed by Romish authorities that faith could be enforced; in other words, that men can be compelled to believe, even against their will and reason; whereas all faith is free. It is essentially so. Faith under constraint or restraint is no faith at all.

Luther cared little for what Tetzel said about him and his theses. That master of the rhetoric of abuse had on more than one occasion paid his respects to Luther. Luther's retort was strong, but not elegant. He said he seemed to hear an ass braying. He declared he was glad that such men as Tetzel did not consider him a good Christian. This David was not always careful to select smooth stones to slay his Goliath.

But there were more influential opponents than Tetzel. Prierias, a confidant of the pope, answered the theses. John Eck, a learned professor at the University of Ingolstadt, and who in the battle just beginning

was to take a great part against Luther, wrote a reply which was full of bitterness and scurrility. He had been on friendly terms with Luther up to this time, and when reproached for his breach of friendship and courtesy he excused himself on the ground that he had written his treatise for the archbishop, and not for publication. But the cruel words found their way to the eye of the public.

In all these answers there were more assumptions than arguments, and threats were not wanting. Luther was a dangerous person, a Hussite, and ought to be sent to the stake. Rome has often found it more convenient to burn her enemies than to answer them. Fire does its work more quickly and effectively than logic. In default of force of argument resort is had to the argument of force.

But Luther was not idle. He published a "Sermon to the German People," in which he set forth his views touching the sale of indulgences. The man's soul was stirred within him. The soldier's blood was up. His full strength came out only in the fierceness of the impending combat. War never makes generals; it simply develops them. The conflict with Rome did not make Martin Luther into the reformer; it simply brought out the volcanic energies of the man.

In the meantime he went on with his duties at Wittenberg as usual. Staupitz was still his friend, his fellow-professors approved his stand and the boldness of the man, and his absolute sincerity made him the idol of the student body. Nothing appeals so powerfully to young manhood as courage; and, possibly,

there was something of partisanship in the support the members of the Augustine order gave him.

In the spring he attended a chapter meeting of his order at Heidelberg. The Elector Frederick, who owed Luther a recognized debt of gratitude for helping him to protect his subjects from the ravages of Tetzel, felt some concern for Luther's safety, and wrote a personal letter to Staupitz concerning him. But the matter of indulgences did not come before the body, and Luther was treated with consideration by all parties. He was always social by nature, and while his life was not at any time a self-indulgent one, he was not at all averse to the social amenities of life. As serious as he was, he always had a ready sense of humor, and some of the best anecdotes of his times find a place in what he said and wrote. He was a true German, and Germans are not morose people.

In May, 1518, after his return from Heidelberg, he hastened to finish a work already begun. This he called "Solutions," and it was an exposition of his theses. In it he took ground that was much more advanced than he had taken in the theses. He was following faithfully, as he had always done, the Light that was leading him. In his theses he had touched very gingerly upon the powers of the pope, and he had not taken unequivocal ground against the dogmas of the Church. Sometimes men take positions which tally fully with their convictions; but when they realize all that is involved in these positions, especially if personal safety or even the matter of their reputation is involved, they shrink back from unpleasant conclusions

and consequences. But the Master can never make great leaders and reformers out of such cowards. Martin Luther knew that the sale of indulgences was wrong, and he was ready to reject any sort of premises that set up such a conclusion as the rightfulness of this traffic in the souls of men. In his "Solutions" he showed that he was making progress in his search after truth and that he was courageous enough to follow his convictions to the bitter end. He asserted that penance was not of scriptural authority; that the pope had no right to dispose of the accumulated works of supererogation, so called; and knowing that one of the popes had issued a decree making legal the sale of indulgences, he asserted that a papal decree was not binding upon the Church until accepted by the Church through a dogma of a general council. It was not long before he gave up this last shred of Romanism.

All this time the agitation was growing. The people, disgusted with the sale of indulgences, were becoming disaffected toward the Church. One of the marvels of the great Reformation was the rapidity of its movement. This was not the twentieth century, but the sixteenth. It was not the age of steam and electricity. It was a time of slow thought and sluggish travel. And yet within a few years, almost in a few months, Germany had broken off the chains of Romanism. The forces leading to such a sudden change were cumulative. The combustibles were gathered for the great conflagration. Luther unwittingly struck the match that set them blazing.

Leo heard of what Luther was saying and doing.

The faithful appealed to his holiness for help. Something must be done, and done at once. A wild boar, he said, had broken loose in Germany, and must be corralled. He would send a papal legate to see what could be done. The wily Cajetan was dispatched to Germany. A diet was held at Augsburg. The papal legate was intent on his special mission, but he found that other questions must be settled. In fact, his coming to Germany had a twofold object. Besides the Luther matter, the pope was anxious for the consent of the diet to a tax which the Vatican wished to impose on Germany, ostensibly for fighting the Turks, but really for some other less worthy object. The diet met this demand with counter demands. The emissaries of the pope had been greedy. The *annates,* or first fruits, which meant the first year's salary of every member of the Romish clergy, from the highest to the lowest, had been exacted by the pope with unrelenting regularity. The diet complained of this and other oppressions, and were in no mood to add to the taxes of the people. Maximilian, the aged emperor of the German Empire, was anxious to secure the influence of everybody, even the Roman legate, in order to make sure that his grandson, afterwards Charles V., should succeed him on his throne. About this time the pope had summarily ordered Luther to appear at Rome within sixty days for trial. Every one knew what that meant. Once in his hands, Leo would have made short shrift with the bold monk who had dared to dedicate his "Solutions" to the pope. The result of the play and interplay of the political forces at

Augsburg was that Cajetan consented to give him a hearing at Augsburg in person.

Much Protestant history centers about the old town of Augsburg. Situated in Bavaria, like many other German cities it has had a varied history. Its beginnings date back to a colony founded by Augustus Cæsar, established in the year 12 B.C., and the name came from Augustus. Once a free city, it enjoyed great commercial prosperity; but the discovery of America and the change in the commercial currents occasioned by that event left the city much depleted; and when, during the time of the first Napoleon, the old German Empire went to pieces, the city lost its political independence and was merged into Bavaria. Here the Protestant princes and adherents met in 1530 and formulated the first Protestant creed, the historic Augsburg Confession of Faith.

To this ancient city Luther journeyed on foot in the autumn of 1518. It was the saddest journey he had ever made. His companion, by the way, was a young monk and pupil of his, Leonard Baier. His thoughts were sorrowful enough. He knew something of what it meant to appear before a Romish tribunal on a charge of heresy.

"And now I must die," he thought; "and what disgrace it will bring upon my parents!" But he had the sentence of death in himself. *"Una salus victis, nullam sperare salutem,"* said the old Trojan; and poor Martin knew well enough that his only hope was to expect no hope. But he did not waver. He was going to his first battle with the powers of Rome, and going with

the courage of a martyr, ready to die for his convictions. One is not surprised that David Hume should see in the willingness of men to die for their faith only the desire for notoriety. Only a Christian can see the martyr spirit.

Luther, footsore and sick, was forced to make the last few miles of his journey in a carriage and to borrow a monk's coat from his friend, John Link, his own being too much worn to be decent.

On his arrival at Augsburg he wished to report at once to Cajetan, the papal legate. That official had promised Frederick that he would deal with Luther in a fatherly way. Luther's friends, however, were more prudent than he was. Even then wise men had learned to distrust the promises of popes and papal legates. The Emperor Maximilian chanced to be hunting in the forests near Augsburg, and from him a safe-conduct was secured for Luther before he was allowed to present himself to Cajetan.

Luther's attitude when he did appear was thoroughly reverential. He prostrated himself before the dignitary. Cajetan held out his hand, and spoke graciously to the humble Luther.

Several interviews were had. The burden of Cajetan's demands was, RETRACT! If Luther would but do this, all would be well. It was intimated to him that if he would but retract, he might expect high promotion from the pope. The papal delegate flattered, scolded, argued, threatened. One of his agents approached Luther. "Do you expect that your prince will take up arms in your defense?" he asked.

"God forbid!" said Luther.

"Where, then, do you look for protection?" asked the satrap.

"From heaven," answered Luther.

The only concession Luther would consent to make was a promise that if the sale of indulgences was discontinued, he would discontinue the agitation. Of course the legate would not consent to this compromise, and Luther himself afterwards felt ashamed that he had offered it. The situation became serious. There was good reason to believe that Cajetan was planning to seize Luther secretly, if not openly, and that, too, in spite of his safe-conduct from the emperor, and Luther, like Saul, fled from the city by night. So hasty was his departure that he did not have time to get all his simple wearing apparel. After a weary return trip, part of it made on horseback without a saddle, he reached Wittenberg on the anniversary of the posting of the theses to the door of the church there.

And so the first battle was over, and the victory was really with the man who had fled from the field. To escape with his life was a victory; to come from the contest with his convictions deepened and his courage strengthened was a greater victory still. To see a foe sometimes lessens one's fear of him.

And now the leader of the great Reformation, whose leadership had come to him all unsought, entered upon a more active and aggressive campaign than ever. He was surprised at his own boldness. He now spoke and wrote things concerning the pope and the Church which a little while before he would have considered

rank heresy. He said that it seemed that a higher, a divine, power moved him. In this he was not mistaken. The Spirit was not revealing new truths to him, but bringing the old to his remembrance.

The emissaries of Rome were also active. After Luther's return from Augsburg Cajetan wrote a letter to the Elector Frederick. He bitterly complained of Luther. He had found him incorrigible. The only honorable course for Frederick to pursue now was to turn Luther over to the authorities at Rome, or at least to banish him from his dominions. Frederick did not reply at once. After some weeks he wrote a very mild reply to Cajetan. He assured that dignitary that Luther's course entirely met his approval. He did not think that Luther should be required to recant, when the matters in dispute had not been adjudicated by a general council.

While Luther felt a freedom and a courage he had not felt before, he realized that his situation was by no means one of safety. He knew the animus of Rome now as he did not know it before. Whatever loyalty he might have felt for the great hierarchy in the past, and however sincere his efforts had been to save his Church from the shame of the indulgences, he knew that he no longer had anything to hope for from Rome. He was coming to regard the pope as antichrist, and he realized that there was nothing for him in the future but an uncompromising war upon the papacy. But he was unwilling to embroil his good friend and protector, Frederick, with the papal see, and he knew that as long as Frederick sheltered him

he was liable to provoke the pope's hostility, a thing much to be dreaded in those days. So he was ready to go into exile. Some thought that he might find safety in Paris, and he was ready to go thither. He expressed himself thus to his friend, Spalatin, the elector's chaplain. "I am in the hands of God and my friends," he said.

Luther did not go into exile. The Lord found other ways of protecting his servant; and his preservation through all the dangers that compassed his life, while not miraculous, was none the less providential. It would be interesting, if such speculations came within the purpose of this history, to philosophize as to what might have happened had he sought safety in France or elsewhere. At times in the history of the world the destiny of a people and of a cause has seemed wrapped up in the life of an individual, but possibly this has not happened as often as we think. Seed sown by a hand that was paralyzed even before the sowing was complete have sprung up and produced a harvest that was all the dearer to men because of the death that sanctified the sowing. Luther had sown the seed; the harvest would have come even though the Romish hierarchy had martyred him. The waters of the Rhine which bore John Huss's ashes to the sea also bore the truths for which he died to the many peoples living along the banks of the historic river, and the very winds, to which these ashes were denied, bore the truths to the utmost parts of the earth.

The mission of Cajetan was a signal failure. He accomplished neither of the objects for which he came.

But possibly this was not his fault. The rising tide of the Reformation might not be stayed by papal diplomacy and papal dogmatism. Luther had no respect for his theological skill. He was a "mútton-headed fellow, who was as awkward in the handling of theology as a donkey would be in handling a harp." His effort to persuade the diet to consent to a greater tribute to the Roman see was a foregone failure. Evidently Leo did not comprehend the gravity of the situation. Blind himself, he did not realize that others had begun to see. He did not know that the light was dawning, and he did not care to know. False persuasions are not infrequent effects of false lives. Men believe in the perpetuity of a thing that has existed a long time; and Leo, naturally enough, regarded the power of the Roman pontiff, centuries-long and augmented by each passing age, as too well established to be shaken by the attacks of a peasant monk up in Germany. But the mouth of this audacious individual must be stopped. A firebrand would do this most effectually, and daring imitators of this child of the devil would be deterred from further disturbances if this man Luther were only thus summarily disposed of.

A new agent of the pope was sent to Germany. The choice of this representative was a stroke of good policy. The person commissioned to look after this agitation in Saxony and elsewhere in the German Empire was himself a German. And better still, in view of his mission, he was a subject by birth of the Elector Frederick. He was the pope's chamberlain. He knew fully the mind of his master at Rome, and he was supposed

to know the mind of his prince in Germany. The name of this trusted envoy of the pope was Charles von Miltitz.

Miltitz was not hampered by unwelcome requests for more taxes. He had but one task to accomplish. This was the arrest of Martin Luther. This would be easy enough, it was supposed at Rome, if the Elector Frederick could be persuaded to withdraw his protection from the man who had stirred up all this commotion. But Miltitz changed his original plans somewhat after he reached Germany. He admitted to Luther that the arrest could not be carried out by an army of 25,000 men; that three out of every four people were favorable to Luther in the controversy. And so, with vindictive secret instructions from the pope and presents and flatteries for Frederick, and hypocritical tears and entreaties for Luther, he set about his work with all the skill of a trained Romish diplomat; and Rome has turned out many an expert in the fine art of diplomacy.

Miltitz brought with him one of the highest tokens of papal favor. This was nothing less than the golden rose, "anointed with the holy chrism, scented with musk, and blessed with the papal benediction." This gift is bestowed on princes even to this day as an evidence of the appreciation by the pope of some act of special loyalty to the Church. However, this gift was not placed at once in the hands of Frederick. The pope was too cautious for that. Miltitz was to deposit it with the Messrs. Fugger, of Augsburg. Its final presentation depended upon the elector's compliance with

the pope's wishes. However, this was not stated in either of the two letters Miltitz carried to Frederick. The first of these letters, at least that which was intended to be first, was full of honeyed words. It professed the most ardent love on the part of the pope for "his son," the faithful Frederick. In his second the real purpose of all this long-winded flattery was fully disclosed. There was in Frederick's dominions an infected sheep. This sheep was a son of Satan. This diseased member of the flock would spread contagion to other sheep. The elector himself would be defiled by the presence of this sheep. The pope was sure Frederick would coöperate with his ambassador, Miltitz, in bringing this sheep to justice. A letter of similar import was sent to Spalatin, Luther's friend, the chaplain of Frederick; and the papal messenger was armed with more than threescore epistles of this purport addressed to different cities of Germany. In all of them the pope had only one designation for Luther —he was a child of the devil.

It is not known whether Miltitz intended to see Luther at first or not; possibly, if he did intend to see him, it was with a view of impressing upon Luther as a matter of personal safety the importance of renouncing his position at once. If he had been perfectly free to carry out his intentions, he certainly would not have minced words with the man whose words had aroused all this furor. But the man who would be cruelly unrelenting when able to carry out his wishes can flatter and temporize when he finds himself balked of his purpose. The two men met at the home of Spalatin the

first week in January, 1519. "O, Brother Martin!" exclaimed the sagacious Miltitz. "I thought you were an old monk arguing with himself while he sat by his kitchen fire, but now I see how young and strong and vigorous you are." He went on to tell Luther that for a hundred years nothing had occasioned so much trouble at Rome as this matter had. The pope would rather have given a hundred ducats than for all this to have happened. He actually shed tears as he told Luther about the troubles of the holy father. The two men ate supper together, and there were outward evidences of the warmest regard and fellowship.

Luther was not deceived by all this and the apostolic kiss bestowed upon him when they parted, but he was not discourteous and did not let Miltitz know that he understood his subterfuges. Miltitz offered terms of peace, and a truce was concluded. It was the last of Luther's efforts to be reconciled to Rome.

Luther agreed to write two letters. One of these was to be a sort of apology to the pope. The other was to be an open letter to the people of Germany. In the former, which was duly written, Luther retracted nothing, but assured the holy father, his spiritual superior the pope, that his purpose all the time had been to defend the Church from what he considered a great wrong. In the letter to the public Luther conceded all he could, and urged the people to avoid misrepresentations and misjudgments of the pope. Compromises have not often resulted in permanent peace, and this one did not.

CHAPTER XI.

Luther in the Gathering Storm.

The quasi pact between Luther and Miltitz could not bring permanent peace. It was not even a compromise. Stripped of all its flatteries and subterfuges, all that Miltitz promised Luther was that if he would behave himself in future the pope stood ready to forgive him. Rome conceded nothing, and made no admissions of wrong-doing in connection with the sale of indulgences. Infallibility is not wont to reverse itself. In fact, about this time Leo issued a bull not merely approving what had been done in the traffic in indulgences but authorizing the continuance of the business. However, the agitation raised by Luther had greatly reduced the proceeds of the trade. As he expressed it afterwards, he had had the courage to bell the cat, and afterwards the dupes of the impious fraud were more wary. This was the beginning of the end of this popish imposture. Whatever Rome may claim as her abstract rights (and her asserted rights have remained abstract only when she was unable to make them concrete), an effort to sell indulgences in European and American countries in the twentieth century by agents of the Vatican is an inconceivable possibility.

Luther kept his part of the contract with Miltitz in good faith for a time. After issuing the letters already referred to, he kept the peace for some months. We can only speculate as to how long this silence

would have continued if he had not been called to battle again by an indirect attack upon him by his old friend, now become his bitter opponent, John Eck. Eck, as we have seen, had assailed him viciously after the posting of the ninety-five theses, and he had not had the magnanimity to acknowledge the wrong he had done Luther. A man who is unwilling to right one wrong is generally ready to do another wrong. Eck was evidently anxious to enter the lists against Luther. But for reasons best known to himself (possibly because he wished to place Luther in the attitude of the aggressor), he did not challenge Luther to open controversy. The method he employed accomplished all that he could have wished in the way of open controversy with Luther, and reopened the half-closed breach between Luther and Rome and broadened that breach ultimately into permanent separation.

Luther had a friend and colleague at Wittenberg whose name was Karlstadt. At first Karlstadt had looked warily upon the theses of Luther. Later, however, he had espoused those theses fully. He had answered the "Obelisks," which was the title of Eck's reply to Luther's theses. He was generous and impetuous, and anxious to defend the Lutheran contentions. And Eck was quite willing to meet Karlstadt. He claimed to have won victory in theological debates in many German universities. For some time a public disputation between Eck and Karlstadt had been planned. Eck issued thirteen theses for which he proposed to stand. In these he went much further than

anything that had been originally contemplated in his debate with Karlstadt. He called his antagonist the special defender of Luther. The essence of his contentions was the supremacy of the pope. Luther saw through all this, and he could not remain silent longer. He felt that to do so would not only be cowardly; it would likewise be hurtful to the truth itself. Eck, he said, had let loose the frogs or the flies intended for him on Karlstadt. He wrote a letter to the elector in which he declared it had been his intention to keep the peace agreed upon by Miltitz and himself, but that as Eck had now made this impossible, he believed that God would overrule it all. The matter of victory in the controversy, so far as the comparative skill of the contestants was involved, was not as vital as the truth itself. Besides (and possibly this had as much weight with the elector as any other consideration), it was the reputation of the University of Wittenberg, the elector's pride, that was attacked.

Luther issued a challenge to Eck. Let that doughty warrior add Saxony to the long list of his intellectual conquests. Let him rid his stomach of that which seemed to lie heavily upon it. Luther issued a set of theses for which he was willing to contend, and challenged Eck to meet him in open discussion of these propositions. The sum of these was a denial of the supremacy of the pope.

Luther's friends were naturally solicitous about his success, and also about his personal safety. He was wittingly or unwittingly handling dangerous explosives. In fact, he was placing these explosives dangerously

near the very foundations of the ecclesiastical structure. Luther prepared himself with great care. He gave a closer study than he had ever before given to Church history and Church law, and he found ample evidence in both to sustain his contentions. The power of the pope, while it had been a fact for a thousand years, rested only upon papal decretals, and not upon ecclesiastical history, and was contrary to the decrees of the Council of Nice and to the Scriptures.

The historic debate between Luther and Eck took place in the summer of 1519, beginning July 4. The place was Leipsic, one of the famous old cities of Saxony. It was five hundred years old at this time. For a hundred years it had been the seat of a noted university, which still exists, and in after times it was to be connected in tragic ways with the great Reformation. In the Thirty Years' War it was captured and recaptured by the contending armies, and was almost wiped off the map. Near here in 1813 a three days' battle was fought between the army of Napoleon and the allies, the result of which was one of the first checks the great Corsican received in his bloody propaganda. The welcome Luther received in Leipsic was not cordial, but in the course of time the citizens of the city were ready to adopt the principles for which he contended, and their descendants have never departed from those principles.

The debate was held under the most approved conditions. It was encouraged by Duke George, the local ruler of that part of Saxony, who opened up Pleisenburg, one of his castles, for the purpose, and many

distinguished men attended the discussion. The speeches were in Latin, and were taken down by notaries duly appointed. The old castle where this debate took place was still standing a few years since.

A contemporary describes Luther as he appeared on this occasion. He was a man of medium height, thin because of much study and his abstemious habits, with a pleasant voice, an agreeable countenance, and the manners of a gentleman. His fund of knowledge was wonderful. He had a good working knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, and he preserved his mental equilibrium under all the trying circumstances of the debate. The people were told many foolish things about him. They attached a superstitious charm to a little silver ring he wore on one of his fingers; and they wondered at the frequency with which he smelled a little bunch of flowers he carried in his hand. A good woman of the city told her friends that she knew Frau Luther, and that the latter had confessed that the devil himself was the real father of Martin.

As for the debate itself, it would seem to us that, while Luther had truth on his side and the greatest possible sincerity, he was rather worsted by his bout with Eck. The inexorable logic of Rome was against him. To contend, as she did, that the Church is not confined to Rome, but is made up of all true believers, Greek and what not, was an open espousal of the doctrines for which John Huss had been burned at the stake. The big-mouthed, big-bodied, quick-witted, unscrupulous Eck took advantage of this admission on Luther's part, and called Luther a Bohemian. Luther

sought with dubious success to parry this thrust. It was final and fatal to him in the eyes of many who heard the debate. Luther at last acknowledged that councils could err, and that the final appeal as to matters of faith must be had to the Bible itself. He told Eck in conclusion that he was sorry that that individual dipped into the Bible as the water spider dipped into water, and seemed as much afraid of the Word of God as the devil is of the cross. As for himself, he deferred to the Bible more than to the decrees of councils and the bulls of popes.

Luther returned to Wittenberg much dejected. He had been accompanied thither by some two hundred of the students of the university and by his *fidus Achates,* Philip Melanchthon. His feelings were not merely the mortification one experiences who has been defeated before the public. He had little of this feeling. His purpose in all this controversy was not victory, but the establishment of the truth. He could but see more and more that his opponents were only intent on his undoing. Logically he was already out of the Romish Church; the real separation had already taken place: the formal act would follow soon enough. No fact in all the history of Luther fills the sympathetic student of his life with more admiration than the persistent, pathetic way in which he clung to the ecclesiastical house in which he was reared. He left the mother Church not with the festivities of the prodigal intent upon spending his substance in riotous living, but with the sorrowful tears of a devoted son who is driven from the parental roof.

But the meeting at Leipsic had not been a failure, whatever may have been the seeming popular effect of the debate. The truth as set forth by Luther did not fall to the ground. Many heard the debate, others heard about it, and the minds of many honest men were open to what commended itself to every impartial man's conscience in the sight of God. And in the course of time influential men of the nobility came to the support of the cause of Luther. Germany had never submitted cheerfully to the exactions and oppressions of Rome. The love of liberty was too strong in the old Teutonic race for that; and the courage of Luther excited the admiration of a people who through all their history, from the days of Julius Cæsar down to this time, had possessed the qualities of true soldiers.

Among those attracted to Luther at this time was Ulrich von Hutten. He was of a noble family, had had a taste of monastic life in his youth (coming out of it with thorough disgust) studied law, traveled extensively for those times, and was a sort of literary and theological free lance. In 1518 he wrote at least a part of the second series of the "Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum," a set of letters which in satire rival the famous letters of Junius. These letters were intended as attacks upon scholasticism especially, and they also called attention in the most sarcastic way to the errors and abuses of Romanism. Of course, in full harmony with the spirit of the age and the Church, these letters were publicly burned at the command of the pope. But to burn a book or a document does not cause men to forget it, and does not destroy its influence. Some-

times the opposite effect results. Ulrich von Hutten became a fast friend of Luther's, and with characteristic impetuousness offered to defend him with his sword. Franz von Sickingen, a German noble of one of the Rhine provinces, offered Luther exile in his castle, if it should become necessary for the reformer to leave the dominion of Frederick.

But there was one friend upon whom Luther leaned through all these troublous times and through all the years of his after life. This was Philip Melanchthon. Melanchthon was a marvel of precocity. He entered the faculty at Wittenberg at twenty-one, already well equipped for his place. He came to the institution the very year that Luther posted his theses. The attachment between the two men was spontaneous and almost instantaneous. The strong, angular Luther, not always refined in his way of putting the truth, though always sincere, found in Melanchthon the check that he needed. Gentle, conservative, refined, and more learned in some things than Luther, Melanchthon furnished the conservatism that Luther needed. Melanchthon could never have led in the great Reformation; he lacked the aggressive initiative necessary for a work like that. Without him, however, Luther might have gone too far and too fast. Luther was the centrifugal force, Melanchthon the centripetal, in the great forward movement of the Church at this time. It is not surprising that the two became lifelong friends. Such friendships are common in every age and people. They are essential to human happiness, and men are the better for them.

A great political change took place about this time, and one that had much to do with the fortunes of the great Reformation. Maximilian, the German Emperor, died in January, 1519. It is only a matter of conjecture as to what his attitude would have been toward the great Protestant movement which was just beginning when he died. He was a Catholic, but he had no great opinion of the popes. He was German to the core, and it is certain that he would not have allowed Luther to fall unprotected into the hands of Leo.

Luther always spoke kindly and loyally of Maximilian. He records this saying of the emperor: "There are three kings in Europe," said Maximilian. "I am king of kings, who obey me if they wish; the king of France is king of donkeys, who do what he commands, whether they like it or not; the King of England is king of men, who obey him because they love their king and their country."

During some months after the death of Maximilian Frederick the Wise, Luther's unfailing friend, seems to have exercised temporarily the office of royal executive. And he might have had the emperor's throne if he had been willing. But he was well advanced in years by this time, and no doubt preferred the quietude of his own little domain to the turmoil of the empire. Through his influence Charles, already King of Spain, was chosen to Maximilian's place and assumed the title of Charles V. The pope opposed the choice of Charles. This fact must have had its influence in shaping Charles's attitude toward Luther. He was

a devout Catholic, and lent himself in the course of his reign quite fully to the wishes of the papacy; but he could but feel kindly toward Frederick, and show some consideration to those Frederick favored. And thus in this initial stage of the great Reformation, as in many of its after stages, Luther and his followers owed much to the counterplay of political forces in Europe. Charles was an excellent prince in many respects. Coming to the throne of the greatest empire of modern Europe when only twenty years of age, he exhibited from the beginning many kingly qualities, and his reign was one of the most illustrious in all history. While he never favored the great Reformation from any sympathy with the doctrines for which Luther stood, and while what concessions he showed the Protestants from time to time were mainly due to the necessities of his kingdom in his almost ceaseless wars with France, yet he was a noble enemy, and Luther always honored him. As we have seen, he grew weary and surfeited with royalty at last, and sought in a monastery the quiet which he had never known in all his life.

There were those who hoped for favor for the Lutheran contentions from Charles. Young, generous, with every human ambition satisfied, and owing his accession to the German throne to Frederick the Wise, there seemed good reason to suppose that he would be magnanimous in his dealings with a movement that really had as one of its political effects the freeing of Germany from the domination of Italy. But men's religious faith is usually fixed before they reach the

age of twenty, provided they have had any religious training at all, and whatever changes take place after that age are usually in the direction of less, and not more or different faith. Charles had been trained a Catholic, and a Catholic he remained to the day of his death.

Luther was not idle all this time. He gave diligent attention to his parochial duties and to the duties of his professorship. He used the press, and sent forth many tracts and pamphlets. About this time he published a most helpful little brochure on sorrow which helped many sad hearts, the elector's among the rest. He realized that the shadow of a possible martyrdom was over him, and he felt like his Master, who said: "I must work the works of him that sent me, . . . the night cometh, when no man can work." He did not whine; he did not grow bitter; he did not seek the shade of some juniper tree and ask to die. He was subject to moods of great depression in the course of his life, but these usually came when there was no urgent need for immediate action. He illustrated one of the paradoxes of human nature. Strong men are usually least troubled when outward conditions would seem to afford greatest reason for being troubled. Constrained inaction makes strong men the victims of their own morbid feelings. A true soldier is happier on the battlefield than inside the walls of an enemy's prison.

Luther did not cease his agitation with reference to the papacy. To the votaries of Rome he seemed perniciously active. If his enemies gave him no rest, he gave them none. Already the plans for his arrest

were being matured. His recent opponent, now become his personal enemy, had gone to Rome to lay the matter before the pope. Eck was only too glad to go on this mission with the indorsement of Duke George. One of his contemporaries said that Eck's face was like a butcher's, and evidently his nature was of the same sort. He believed that he had vanquished Luther in debate. If he had been generous, this would have satisfied him. But he was too true to the worst teachings of Roman Catholicism to be generous. Like his superiors, he believed that the best answer to Martin Luther was the stake. Such heretics deserved no mercy.

It is but justice to the Romish hierarchy to say that its attitude toward Luther for many months after he began his attack upon its power was notably conservative. The papal bull authorizing the sale of indulgences, which was issued the latter part of 1518, more than a year after Luther had posted his theses, did not specify Luther by name. Two universities, Cologne and Luvain, had condemned his teachings, and one of the German bishops had also condemned them. But Luther treated these condemnations with contempt. Two high papal officials had been dispatched into Germany to arrange matters with Luther. The bull of excommunication, though it came at last, was long delayed.

This forbearance is explained in part by the arrogance of Rome itself. Leo and his advisers regarded the matter as too trivial to merit serious attention. Another fact contributed to this state of inaction on

the part of the Vatican. Luther's teachings were immensely popular in Germany. He had simply voiced the deepest convictions of the best people; and the German princes were not disinclined to favor a man whose contentions served to magnify their power as against the power of the pope. Miltitz understood all this when he reached Germany, and found, too, no doubt, that the German ecclesiastics were secretly favorable to a man who contended for the independence of the German clergy, so long hampered by the pretensions of the pope. Albert, the archbishop, had himself gone far enough to say that the papal power was only an incident, and not an essential to Christianity. A knowledge of all these facts explains Miltitz's persistent effort to settle the whole matter by negotiation. The personal hostility of Eck and others, and Luther's own aggressiveness, made this effort at mediation utterly abortive.

Luther's zeal was unremitting. Every controversy he had (and he had many) only led him to take more advanced ground. He did not deny his sympathy with Huss. "We are all Hussites," he said, speaking of those who agreed with him. "Paul and Augustine were Hussites." His friends counseled him to moderation. "You can't make a pen out of a sword," he answered. "Jesus came not to send peace, but a sword." He admitted that he was rash, but said that his enemies knew it, too, and ought not to stir up the dog. His answers were not always soft, and they did not turn away the wrath of his opponents. One wonders at the patience of princes and Church dignitaries

under his castigation. He was bold, reckless, defiant. But his hot words were forged in a heart that was set on fire from heaven itself.

Good men watched the progress of the movement and wondered. Erasmus, the learned autocrat of the Humanists, with characteristic caution did not condemn the agitation, but did not commit himself to Luther's support. The good Staupitz, Luther's spiritual father, sought to restrain the impetuousness of his young friend. About this time the venerable man, weary by reason of age, retired from his place as vicar-general of the Augustine order, and sought the retirement so congenial to men of his devout temperament when the pressure of time is upon them. Spalatin, the elector's chaplain, was Luther's constant counselor, and always on the side of caution and prudence. His words had as much weight with Luther as the words of any one could have, since he was closest to the good Frederick, to whose friendship Luther owed his immunity from arrest up to this time. Melanchthon, his beloved young friend, to whom he gave a warmer affection than he ever gave any other man, was close to him and helped him with his sympathy as well as with his knowledge. He received assurances of appreciation from the Bohemians, and was too sincere not to accept it in generous kindness.

Disquieting rumors continued to come from Rome. He had intimations through Spalatin of the storm that was gathering at the Vatican, but these premonitions only served to stir up his spirit to more aggressive warfare. The battle was on, and it was no longer a war

of defense. He now attacked the strongholds of the papacy.

In 1520 he issued some notable publications. Their tenor was radical and revolutionary. They rang like the bugle call. Germany, Europe, and the Vatican could no longer sleep after they were sent forth. Miltitz could accomplish nothing with his efforts at mediation after this. The cautions of friends could avail nothing now. Battle to ultimate victory or utter defeat was inevitable. The words of Luther in these publications thrill the student of history after the lapse of four centuries. These are not the words of a wild fanatic nor of the bold politician. They throb with the heart beat of a man deliberately ready to shed his blood for his convictions.

In the first of these publications Luther makes a vigorous onslaught upon the claims of the papacy. The pope is surrounded by three walls. The first of these is that the spiritual power is superior to the temporal. The second wall is the claim of the pope to be the sole authorized interpreter of the Scripture. The third wall is the asserted but unauthorized right of the pope to call a general council. He attacks these walls one by one. He denies the right of the pope to impose celibacy upon the priests. He deplored the immoralities of the priests. Marriage was objectionable to many of them because it would restrain their lustful liberty. He would be glad to see every convent in the land turned into a school. Men and women ought to be allowed to enter and leave the monastic life at will. He deplored the ignorance of the people, and the indifference

of those in authority to this ignorance. He disputed the claims of the pope to exercise the exclusive right of ordination. German bishops need not go to Rome for ordination. The laity should have the cup as well as the bread in the sacrament. Emperors could call general councils. Laymen could sit in those councils.

Following this notable publication, a little later in the same year came his famous "Babylonian Captivity." In this he showed the fearful corruption of the Church, especially with reference to the sacraments.

Luther sent these books to the elector, and received in return a basket of game. Afterwards Frederick declared that he saw nothing so very objectionable in what Luther had written.

These publications created a great sensation. Four thousand copies of them were disposed of in a few weeks. New editions were called for. The people devoured these brave words, and admired the man who was brave enough to write and print them.

Meanwhile the pope had issued a bull of excommunication against Luther. This, which was signed in June, was borne to Germany by John Eck. That vindictive individual had accomplished his vengeful mission to the Vatican. He would now silence forever the man who had dared to challenge him to debate. We can only imagine how he gloated over his triumph as he returned from far-away Italy and reached Germany in the early days of autumn.

CHAPTER XII.

Luther, before the Diet of Worms.

The long delayed blow was ready to descend at last. It hung suspended as by a hair over the devoted head of Martin Luther, the daring author of the ninety-five theses and other attacks upon the papacy.

The bull of excommunication was couched in the most solemn language. It called upon the Lord and all the holy apostles and all good men to help to defend the Church from the wild boar that had broken into the vineyard of the Lord, the wild beast that was ravaging the vines. Forty-one of Luther's contentions were singled out of his works and condemned. These he was required to retract within sixty days, or he would be visited with the punishment due such a gross offender. The pope declared that he had sought by every fatherly means to bring Luther to repentance, but, failing in all this, he must protect the Church against a man who was inveighing against its most sacred institutions. Among Luther's propositions condemned, significantly enough, was his disapproval of the burning of John Huss. It was easy enough to infer from this that a similar fate awaited Luther if he persisted in his course.

Miltitz, either because he did not know the mind of the pope or knew it better than his contemporaries did and better than subsequent historians have known it, still insisted that the matter might be adjusted. At

his instance Luther wrote what seems to have been his last letter to Leo. This letter was not calculated to placate the papacy. He recants nothing. On the contrary, he turns preacher to the pope himself. He sends Leo a copy of a little book entitled "The Freedom of a Christian." This is a noble deliverance, but it was not calculated to please the taste of the pope. After various other statements, he declares that he has never said or written anything that was intended to be a personal attack upon Leo. He regards that incumbent of the papal chair as the victim of conditions that he is not really responsible for, and exhorts Leo if he cannot reform the corruptions which the pope himself knows exist about him, to vacate the papal see, and thus escape all responsibility for those conditions, He assures Leo that his war is upon the system itself, and not upon him. Under the circumstances, the boldness of this letter was nothing less than audacity. Luther's courage was of the kind that grows stronger with increasing danger.

The death of Leo three years after this gives Luther's words to him the solemnity of a prophetic warning. Like many of his predecessors and successors in the papal chair, he was chiefly intent upon the extension of the territorial and temporal powers of the papal see. He found it possible very early in the reign of Charles V. to conclude a most advantageous alliance with the young emperor. This agreement increased his domain in Italy. But just when he was rejoicing over the results of this treaty he was seized with a mortal sickness, and died before he could receive ex-

treme unction. "Pray for me," he said to those about him, "that I may recover and make you all happy." After his death the populace followed his body through the streets of the city with insults. They could not forgive him for dying before receiving the last rites of the Church. They said he had come in like a fox, reigned like a lion, and died like a dog! Very different was the death and burial of Martin Luther, twenty-three years later.

The future that Luther faced at this time would have driven a less courageous man either to surrender or to voluntary exile. His friends, Frederick among them, had hoped for favor from Charles. Erasmus had warned him against any such expectations, and Frederick, after returning from the Low Countries, whither he had gone to see Charles, notified him through Spalatin that Charles would show him no consideration. With the power of the greatest spiritual ruler in all the world and the power of the greatest monarch in Europe combined against him, the poor peasant of Mansfeld had little human or worldly hope. But he did not waver. In hours like this he used to nerve himself for the battle that was upon him with his own war song, his immortal version of the forty-sixth Psalm:

> A mighty fortress is our God—
> A refuge never failing.

In this fortress he found shelter and strength and safety. All courage is born of faith, and no courage is so enduring as that which is born of faith in God.

The papal bull gave him a strange sense of freedom. One of the ruling passions of his life had been his loyalty to the Church to which he had given his life. Such loyalty could not be broken at once; and he could not himself sever the ties of this loyalty. But Rome had severed these ties and sent him forth a spiritual outcast. Henceforth he was free from all obligations to the Romish hierarchy. He was responsible to God alone now. His fidelity to the Church had rested upon his allegiance to Christ. When, as Luther conceived it, the pope undertook to supersede Christ, he became antichrist to Luther.

Of course Luther was never, in all the emergencies of his life, without strong and influential friends ready and willing to stand by him. Eck discovered this when he returned to Germany with the bull of excommunication. In some cities the feeling was so strong that he was in danger of being mobbed. He said some of the Wittenberg students "treated him in a good-for-nothing way." A man who stands for liberty will always find friends among the people. Luther stood for religious and civil liberty, and the common people recognized him as their champion.

Events now followed each other in rapid succession. At first Luther refused to accept the genuineness of the bull brought back by Eck. But he was soon driven from this hope. In November he renewed his appeal to a general council. Evidently he had little hope from this appeal, otherwise he would not have taken his next step. This was so decided that it made retreat impossible.

This step was taken on December 11, 1520. On that day, early in the forenoon, a great crowd gathered at a place not far from the eastern gate of Wittenberg. The papal decretals and all the papal law books were piled in a heap on the ground. Luther was accompanied by Melanchthon and other professors. A torch was applied to the heap of books. When the bonfire was fully kindled Luther brought forward the bull of excommunication against himself and threw it into the flames, exclaiming as he did so: "Since thou hast vexed the Holy One, may eternal fires destroy thee!" He afterwards admitted to Staupitz that he trembled as he did this, but declared that when it was done he felt better than he had ever felt before in all his life. The students celebrated the event by marching through the streets and carring a great cartoon in the shape of a bull, four feet long.

Conservative Christians of the twentieth century may regard this burning of the papal bull as a display of a barbaric rather than a Christian spirit. But it should be remembered that Luther and his followers had learned this use of fire from Rome itself, and had not yet learned that other spirit, which Rome has never taught—the spirit of toleration and forbearance. The growth of Christian sentiment since that memorable day in the sixteenth century has been due to the convictions of the men that kindled that bonfire.

Luther was ready to defend his act. If any wished to know why he had burned the papal documents, let such a one understand that it was his duty as a baptized Christian to defend the Church against all false doc-

trines. He had vowed to do this when he had become a Doctor of Theology. The pope had assumed all the authority of an earthly God. None dared to ask him: "What doest thou?" Was not this "the abomination of desolation" spoken of by the Saviour? Was not this the antichrist? In a larger work, addressed to the public, he discusses more at length the issues for which he stood, and plants himself uncompromisingly upon the authority of the Bible as against the decrees of popes and general councils. If any thought him presumptuous, he would say that he was assured that he had the Bible on his side.

And for the first time in all his life Luther was a free man. He felt himself fully absolved from all obligations to his order. He retained the garb of a monk and lodged in the monastery, but he threw off the slavery of the *horæ* and other monastic observances. He declared that he had enough real work to do without these things. Besides preaching and lecturing, he had abundant calls to enter the arena of controversy. He had a noted literary combat with the Dresden theologian, Emser. Luther spoke of Emser as a "goat," and Emser retorted by calling Luther a "bull." In this controversy the issues of the great Reformation were thoroughly thrashed out. If the debate had none of the refined qualities of academic discussion, it had at least the combativeness which attracted popular interest and attention. The great polemic battles of the Church have not been fought in classic Latin or English or German. As long as men are men, strong faith and strong conviction cannot thus be voiced.

Germany was now in a ferment. Men took up their pens for and against Luther, and were ready to take up their swords. The nation faced the greatest crisis in its history. Political issues were not alone involved. The moral and spiritual life of a great people was at stake. It was Jehovah's call to the nations. Some of them heard it, and rose to enlightenment and power. Refusing to hear, other nations sank back into barbarism or reaped the harvest of their folly in blood and revolution. Carlyle speaks of France at this time, of her rejection of the light of the great Reformation, and of the awful judgment that followed in the eighteenth century.

A great battle was raging, and Luther was in the forefront of the conflict. The inspiration of potential martyrdom was upon him. He believed that the end of the world was at hand. He interpreted the prophecies of Daniel and the second chapter of Thessalonians to mean this. Believing that his Lord was at hand, he hastened to meet him. For this reason, and because he believed that such a method of propagation was utterly at variance with the gospel, he discountenanced every effort and thought of taking up arms in defense of his personal safety and the cause for which he contended. There was much bloodshed in the aftertime in consequence of the great Reformation, but this was because Rome invoked the help of the civil power to maintain its waning cause.

The great crisis in the life of Martin Luther was now approaching. The papal bull had allowed sixty days in which to recant, and in addition sufficient time

for his recantation to reach Rome. Luther did not recant. There was nothing for him, therefore, but the full and final sentence of excommunication. On January 3, 1521, the final word was spoken, and Luther stood forth an ecclesiastical outlaw. And the papal interdict was on all places that might give him shelter. Henceforth, so far as Rome could make it so, he was driven out like another Cain, to be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. But Rome was not so merciful as was Jehovah to Cain. Rome's mark did not protect Martin Luther from death, but was a warrant of death against him, virtually authorizing any of the faithful to slay him. For years afterward he was in imminent danger. Rome's thirsty bloodhounds were constantly on his track.

In the spring of this memorable year he was haled before the diet which met at Worms. The princes of the empire, presided over by the young emperor, would sit in judgment upon the peasant priest who had stirred up so much strife in Germany.

We shall see how Luther met this, the greatest crisis of his life.

CHAPTER XIII.

Luther at the Diet of Worms.

As we have already seen, the effect of the papal bull against Luther and the interdict accompanying it had not, up to this time, greatly endangered the personal safety of the reformer. This ancient sword of the papacy had lost its edge. Once it had been the mightiest weapon of the popes. For many centuries a decree of this nature had carried terror to the superstitious, trouble to kings and princes, and distress to a whole nation. The unfortunate and unscrupulous John, who ruled and misruled in England during the early part of the thirteenth century, had brought down upon his head and that of his people the interdict. Dire consequences followed. Churches were closed. Bells were taken down from steeples. Sacred emblems were removed from the altars. Christian burial was denied the dead. Marriages were performed only in graveyards. Baptism was grudgingly given to newly born infants. The shadow of a great curse seemed to hang over the land.

But no such consequences followed the proclamation of the bull against Luther in Germany. Eck, who had brought it from Rome, was laughed at and lampooned by the students of the universities. The dignitaries of the Church received him with scant favor. In many places the bull was not published at all. Miltitz, who resented the interference of Eck in a matter that had

been intrusted to him, gave little comfort to the officious doctor of Leipsic. Poor Miltitz ended his mission and his career in a most ignoble way not long afterwards. While intoxicated he fell into the Rhine and was drowned. Thus perished the German chamberlain and trusted envoy of Leo.

The favor of the nobility and the best class among the scholars of Germany rendered the bull against Luther a practical nullity. He went on with his work unmolested and with buoyant spirits. A wondrous transformation had taken place in Germany within a few years. The seeds of truth never found a readier soil. The great Reformation had virtually taken place. Germany had really broken, at least in spirit, with the papacy. But Leo found an ally in Charles. The young emperor had German blood in his veins, but he did not have the heart of a German. He did not have even a thorough acquaintance with the German language. He put a higher estimate upon his prerogatives as king of Spain and Naples than upon his title and restricted power as emperor of Germany. He believed in the Roman Catholic faith with all his soul. He was still young, and the young are often more bigoted than the old.

But Charles was a prudent person for his age, and while he would have been willing enough to turn Luther over to the tender mercies of the pope, he was wise enough to recognize the fact that the matter was more serious than the obduracy of just one man, and he too no high dignitary in the Church. The estates of Germany were too favorable to Luther's conten-

tions, and too rebellious at heart against the pope, for any summary disposal of the issues involved. What was done must be done with the consent of the German princes. A diet was summoned, and met at Worms on January 28, 1521.

Worms is a famous old German city in Hesse-Darmstadt, on the left bank of the historic Rhine. In modern times it has lost much of its ancient standing, its population being less than one-fourth of what it was about the time Martin Luther was summoned to appear before the diet here in the spring of 1521. Charlemagne and his successors used to tarry here with their courts in the olden times, and associated with the place is a famous old German epic poem, made up probably of other older poems, and known to readers of old German literature as the "Nibelungenlied." The massive cathedral was finished during the twelfth century, after being in process of building nearly four hundred years. The city has never fully recovered from its almost total destruction by the French in 1689, and the new city does not occupy precisely the same site as the old Worms. A monument, completed in 1868, commemorates Luther's appearance before the diet here, really the greatest event in the history of the old city.

The diet was not an elective body, but was really feudal in its origin. In the time of Luther it was composed of the princes of the several independent States and free cities of Germany, which were united in the strong confederation known as the German Empire. The diet sat twice a year, and the emperor, who was

chosen by the diet, whenever there was a vacancy, presided over its deliberations. The emperor could veto any measure adopted by the diet, but he could not modify any of its measures. And he could not enact laws without the consent of the diet. This ancient assembly no longer exists.

This was the august body before which Luther appeared at the command of Charles. The decision to summon Luther before the body was not reached until the matter had been debated long and anxiously. Those who favored the papal contentions opposed the summoning of Luther There were obvious reasons for their opposition. Luther had been condemned by the pope. This ought to suffice for the emperor and the diet. An appearance before the diet would have in it something of the nature of an allowed appeal, and such a heretic deserved no such right. It was finally decided to summon Luther before the diet, not for the purpose of trial, but merely to give him an opportunity to recant.

Luther had notified Frederick that he would go if summoned by the emperor. "If he calls me," he said, "it is my duty to go." His friends sought to dissuade him.. They assured him that he would be in imminent danger. The treachery in the case of Huss was recalled. Luther was immovable. If the emperor summoned him, he regarded it as his duty to go; and Martin Luther was not the man to turn back from the pathway of duty. God still lived, and his trust was in him. His enemies could burn only his body; they could not burn the truth.

He received the expected call to appear before the diet in March. A royal herald brought the summons. Luther proceeded at once to prepare for the journey. His friends still reminding him of the danger, he declared: "I will go if I must be carried on my sick bed." And later, when told of the imminence of the danger, he met the statement with the famous declaration: "I will go to Worms even if there are as many devils there as there are tiles on the houses!"

Luther set out for Worms late in March. The city of Wittenberg furnished him a carriage and horses. He was accompanied by a little cavalcade of his friends, and his journey was like a triumphal march. Everywhere the people hailed him with delight. They were curious to see the man who had spoken and written so boldly against the pope. At Erfurt he had a royal welcome. He preached in the old church where he had worshiped in other days. The people crowded to hear him. There was a crash in the gallery, and the people were in a panic. Luther quieted them by telling them that it was the devil trying to break up the meeting. This was Luther's ready explanation of many things that happened in his life. The students here had thrown the papal bull into the water and, playing upon the word, challenged it as it was a "bubble," to float. His old friend Crotus was the rector of the university at that time. He hastened to meet Luther some distance from the city, and welcomed him as the defender of the truth. Luther said modestly that he was not worthy of such honor. In his sermon, which was on his favorite theme of salvation by faith, he spoke of his present

situation: "I will speak the truth, and I must speak it," he said. "For this reason I am here."

He preached at Eisenach, tenderly associated with his school days, and afterwards fell sick. He was so ill that his friends became alarmed about his condition. But bleeding, the specific for all diseases in those days and for many days afterwards, was resorted to, and the next day, though still weak and sick, he went on his way. Rumors and other evidences of danger increased as he approached his destination. He saw posted an edict from Charles consigning his work to the flames because he had been condemned by the pope as a heretic. Whatever hope he may have had at this time as to any favor from the emperor was now finally dissipated.

But his enemies were also alarmed. They feared the effect of his appearance before the diet. Somehow, even when men honestly believe a falsehood, the error unconsciously reacts in an unfavorable way upon their courage. Besides, many of Luther's opponents were not sincere, except in their purpose to destroy him. Rome has always believed more in fear and force than in fair play and justice. Since Luther could not be intimidated and thus kept away from the diet, Glapio, Charles's confessor, and Archbishop Albert determined to resort to a ruse to prevent his coming and at the same time get him fully in their hands. These astute gentlemen sent a messenger to Franz von Sickingen, the friend who had offered Luther exile and protection, proposing that Luther meet their representatives in the castle of the old nobleman. The messenger said that

these ecclesiastics thought well of Luther, and that the differences between him and them could be adjusted in a peaceable way. Luther and their representatives would be under the protection of Sickingen. The ruse deceived the honest old German and Bucer, one of Luther's sympathizers, who had taken up his lodging in the castle, and Luther was notified hastily of the proposed conference and urged to turn aside for the purpose. Luther was making his journey to Worms under a safe-conduct from the emperor, and if he had yielded to this arrangement, he could not have made his way thither in the prescribed time. He would thus have forfeited the protection of Charles, and his enemies, who were fully alert, could have arrested him at once. Luther refused to accede to this cunningly devised plan and continued his journey. At night, as he lodged in the inns by the way, he would take his flute and solace himself with its soft melody. The man's soul went out in its notes, now hopeful, now sorrowful, and always trustful and full of the repose of a son of God who is at peace with his Father. Memories of his childhood, tender thoughts of his parents, recollections of his strange, divinely guided life, the friendships he had formed, the truth he had found, the threatening future before him—thoughts like these must have swept through his mind as he touched the stops of his favorite instrument in the gathering shadows of the lengthening spring twilight. David of old, when fleeing from Saul, comforted his soul with his shepherd's harp. Martin Luther, going perhaps to his death, gathered strength from the notes of his flute

for the ordeal awaiting him. Great reformations and great revivals would be impossible without sacred music.

A still greater trial awaited Luther before reaching Worms. A short distance from the city he received a letter from Spalatin urging him not to come. As Spalatin might be supposed to speak for the elector, this was serious indeed. But Luther could not be moved. He wondered at his own courage afterwards, and said that he was not sure that he would be equal to such an emergency again. There is a courage of sudden impulse; there is also the courage of deliberate purpose. The one is daring, heedless, often blind; the other is cool, steady, and fully conscious of the danger involved. The one may waver; the other does not falter. The faith, the purpose, the resolve of years entered into Luther's courage at this moment of destiny, and a divine anointing was on the man.

Luther entered Worms on the morning of the 16th. A company of his friends had ridden out to meet him. A great crowd gathered at the gate to see him. Two thousand people followed him in the streets. Men of all ranks thronged about him. It was as if a royal prince had entered the city. The enthusiasm was greater than when the emperor had come. A court jester entered the procession with a cross and chanted a requiem. Possibly this fool of royal patronage thought to play prophet. Some gentlemen of the court of Frederick escorted him to the house of the Knights of St. John, where he was to lodge with two counselors of the elector. As he stepped from his carriage he said:

"God will be with me." Alexander, one of the papal representatives, writing to Rome, said that he looked around with the eyes of a demon. More than once Luther's flashing eyes had struck terror to the hearts of his enemies.

He was to appear before the diet the next day. This august body met in the palace of the bishop, not far from his lodgings. Here the emperor held his court for the time. Luther was conducted to the place by side streets, the crowd being so great along the direct route as to make this necessary. He waited two hours after reaching the palace before being admitted to the audience hall. As he was going into the hall, tradition says that a famous old warrior, George von Frundsberg, slapped him on the shoulder and said cheeringly: "My poor monk! My poor monk! Thou art on thy way to make such a stand as I and my knights have never made in our toughest battles. If thou art sure of the justice of thy cause, then forward in the name of God, and be of good courage! God will not forsake thee!"

The elector had given him as his lawyer Jerome Schurf, his Wittenberg friend and associate. The pope was represented by an attorney named Eck, but not the Dr. Eck who had given Luther so much trouble in the past.

At last he was called before the body. The scene was enough to embarrass a bolder man. Before him were the princes of all Germany, and the most powerful sovereign in all Europe—and he was not before this great assembly to receive honors, nor as the represen-

tative of an honored cause. True, there were among the members some who sympathized with him, and many close at hand who were his ardent friends. Against him was the Church, hoary with age, well-nigh supreme in power, and waiting only for an opportunity to mete out to him the severest penalties ever visited upon the condemned heads of heretics. Moreover, he stood at the bar of the monarch who had only but yesterday pronounced sentence against him, and who declared that he was ready to give his life and his royal treasures to execute the Church's displeasure upon such a heretic. Above all, the cause for which he had already borne so much was vitally involved. Had Luther wavered at this moment, the cause of the great Reformation might have been delayed a hundred years. No sublimer crisis has occurred in human history since Jesus stood before Pilate. Human courage, reënforced and sanctified by divine grace, has never been put to a severer test.

The hearing of the first day was short. Eck, the papal representative, put two questions to Luther. "Are you the author of these books?" he asked first, pointing to some volumes on a bench. Luther's attorney interposed at this point, and demanded that the titles of the books be read. This was done, and Luther acknowledged their authorship. "Are you willing to retract the contents of these books?" was the imperious challenge of the ecclesiastical attorney.

This summary way of dealing with the question took Luther by surprise, and his answer was given in a low, hesitating voice. He said that in a matter of such mo-

ment he did not feel prepared to answer the question at once, and begged for time to consider. There was a brief conference, and then Luther was informed that the emperor had graciously granted his request. After this he was allowed to retire under escort, with the understanding that he would give his answer the next day.

An anxious night followed. Luther realized that he would not be allowed to plead for a cause that was so dear to his heart, and that the only hope before him, speaking and seeing as men see, was in complying with the peremptory demand of the papal representative for immediate retraction of the things that he had written and spoken concerning the way of salvation. And we may be well assured that this man, who had learned to find God, not by way of popes and saints, living and dead, but by the way of the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, sought the help of the One for whom he was to witness on the morrow, it might be even unto death.

The morrow came, and with it the great ordeal of Martin Luther's life. And his courage rose grandly to the occasion. Whatever embarrassment he may have felt on the first day was all gone now. He went to the meeting place of the diet about the middle of the afternoon, but the April night was closing in before he was given an audience. It was the 18th day of April, 1521. While he waited he talked cheerfully and freely with one of the high officials of the diet—his friend and patron at Augsburg, Peutinger. After waiting two hours, he was admitted to the hall where the diet sat

ready to hear him and, so far as he knew, to condemn him.

Eck began at once to censure him for asking time to consider his answer. He then put the second question of the previous day in a modified and reasonable form. "Dost thou defend *all* the books thou dost acknowledge to be thine, or recant some parts?" asked the papal attorney.

Luther answered these questions specifically and courageously. He spoke in Latin to accommodate Charles, who had little knowledge of German, and no taste whatever for that tongue. His words have been preserved, and are worthy of being kept in everlasting remembrance. This was his defense:

Most serene Emperor, and you illustrious Princes and gracious Lords, I this day appear before you in all humility, according to your command, and I implore your majesty and your august highness, by the mercies of God to listen with favor to the defense of a cause which I am well assured is just and right. I ask pardon if, by reason of my ignorance, I am wanting in manners which befit a court, for I have not been brought up in kings' palaces, but in the seclusion of a cloister.

Two questions were yesterday put to me by his imperial majesty. The first, whether I was the author of the books whose titles were read; the second, whether I wished to revoke or defend the doctrine I have taught. I answered the first, and I adhere to that answer.

As to the second, I have composed writings on very different subjects. In some I have discussed faith and good works in a spirit at once so pure, clear, and Christian that even my adversaries themselves, far from finding anything to censure, confess that these writings are profitable and deserve to be perused by devout persons. The pope's bull, violent as it is, acknowledges this. What, then, should I be doing if I were

to retract these writings! Wretched man! I alone of all men living should be abandoning truths approved by the unanimous voice of friends and enemies, and opposing doctrines that the whole world glories in confessing.

I have composed, secondly, certain works against popery, wherein I have attacked such as by false doctrines, irregular lives, and scandalous examples afflict the Christian world and ruin the bodies and souls of men. And is not this confirmed by the grief of all who fear God? Is it not manifest that the laws and human doctrines of the pope entangle, vex, and distress the consciences of the faithful, whilst the crying and endless extortions of Rome engulf the property and wealth of Christendom, and more particularly of this illustrious nation?

If I were to revoke what I have written on that subject, what should I do but strengthen this tyranny and open a wider door to so many and flagrant impieties? Bearing down all resistance with fresh fury, we should behold these proud men swell, foam, and rage more than ever. And not merely would the yoke which now weighs down Christians be made more grinding by my retraction, it would thereby become, so to speak, lawful; for by my retraction it would receive confirmation from your most serene majesty and all the States of the empire. Great God! I should be like an infamous cloak, used to hide and cover over every kind of malice and tyranny.

In the third and last place, I have written some books against private individuals who had undertaken to defend the tyranny of Rome by destroying the faith. I freely confess that I may have attacked such persons with more violence than was consistent with my profession as an ecclesiastic. I do not think myself as a saint, but neither can I retract these books, because I should by so doing sanction the impieties of my opponents, and they would thence take occasion to crush God's people with still more cruelty.

Yet, as I am a mere man and not God, I will defend myself after the example of Jesus Christ, who said: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness against me." How much more

should I, who am but dust and ashes and so prone to error, desire that every one should bring forward what he can against my doctrine.

Therefore, most serene emperor and you illustrious princes and all, whether high or low, who hear me, I implore you by the mercies of God to prove to me by the writings of the prophets and apostles that I am in error. As soon as I shall be convinced I will instantly retract all my errors, and will myself be the first to seize my writings and commit them to the flames.

What I have just said I think will clearly show that I have well considered and weighed the dangers to which I am exposing myself; but, far from being dismayed by them, I rejoice exceedingly to see the gospel as of old a cause of disturbance and disagreement. It is the character and destiny of God's Word. "I came not to send peace, but a sword," saith Jesus Christ. God is wonderful and awful in his counsels. Let us have a care, lest in our endeavors to arrest discord we be found to fight against the Holy Word of God and bring down upon our heads a frightful deluge of inextricable dangers, present disaster, and everlasting desolations. Let us have a care lest the reign of the young and noble prince, the Emperor Charles, on whom, next to God, we build so many hopes, should not only commence but continue and terminate its course under the most fatal auspices. I might cite examples, drawn from the oracles of God. I might speak of Pharaoh, of kings of Babylon, of Israel, who were never more contributing to their own ruin than when by measures in appearance most prudent they sought to establish their authority! God removeth the mountains, and they know not.

In speaking thus I do not suppose that such noble princes have need of my poor judgment; but I wish to acquit myself of a duty that Germany has a right to expect from her children. And so, commending myself to your august majesty and your most serene highnesses, I beseech you in all humility not to permit the hatred of my enemies to rain upon me an indignation I have not deserved.

After Luther had finished this address and had repeated it in German the prince held a short consultation, and then Eck, speaking for the emperor, rebuked him sharply for calling in question the decisions of councils and relying upon Scriptures to sustain his heresies, already adjudged as such by Rome. He then demanded an answer "without horns."

This evidently aroused the hot-blooded Luther. "Since you ask it," said the reformer, "you shall have an answer without horns or teeth. I cannot and will not retract anything." He declared that he could not allow councils to dictate his faith; they had not been consistent with themselves. Eck denied this, and Luther declared his readiness to prove it. Badgered further by the papal attorney, he uttered those famous words: "Unless I be convinced by Scripture and reason, I neither can nor dare retract anything, for my conscience is a captive to God's Word. And it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. There I take my stand. I can do no otherwise. God help me! Amen."

This defense was the *Magna Charta* of Protestantism. It asserted the superiority of the Bible over popes and general councils. It declared the right of private judgment. It announced the freedom of faith. It set at naught the teachings of the Romish hierarchy for ten centuries. Its boldness and clearness of perception astonish us even now.

Of course the address made a profound impression. There was a moral grandeur about the man that overawed the assembly. Friends and foes alike were

astonished. Luther's manner was thoroughly devout. He spoke as one who is inspired. Even Charles was impressed, though by no means convinced. Only the Italians and Spaniards present mocked. Some open friends and more secret ones were made. The arraignment of Luther—the noble, undaunted champion—before this assembly of princes only forwarded the cause for which he stood.

After Luther's hearing before the diet he was accompanied to his quarters by two officers. This fact led to the impression that he had been spirited away as a prisoner, and much concern was felt by his friends. But he suffered no harm at the hands of his guard, and the emperor kept faith with him in the matter of his personal protection. Charles's Romish advisers counseled a different course, urging that a promise made a heretic was not binding, and that the interests of the Church demanded that Luther should be disposed of at once. And Catholic historians have asserted, and seemed to take special pleasure in the record, that late in life Charles regretted that he did not arrest Luther at once and turn him over to the will of the Romish hierarchy. Thus the Roman Catholic Church has not been satisfied with influencing the whole life of Charles and the administration of his temporal power; the Church covers his name with infamy in order to show his loyalty.

Luther returned to his lodgings rejoicing in spirit. The man who saves his life at the expense of conscience may find pleasure; the deeper joy is his who places all upon the altar of his faith. "Thank God, it

is over!" he exclaimed repeatedly. And his friends rejoiced with him. Frederick was delighted with his courage. The old Duke of Brunswick, though not an adherent, sent him refreshments as a token of his sympathy with his spirit.

Another and final effort was made to reach a settlement of the dispute. Some of the highest dignitaries in the Church in Germany made advances to Luther. They proposed that if he would make such admissions as they suggested, the matter could be arranged with Charles, and the peace of the Church and nation preserved. Luther was not obdurate, but he saw no place for either retreat or compromise. The effort at a settlement therefore came to nothing.

Luther asked permission of Charles to return to Wittenberg, and the request was granted. He set off for home and his work after tarrying some ten days in Worms. But he did not reach there in several months. He disappeared on his way to his old quarters, and for a long and anxious season neither his friends nor his enemies knew his whereabouts or his fate.

CHAPTER XIV.

Luther at the Wartburg, and After.

As willing as Frederick was to protect Luther in his work and residence at Wittenberg, he realized that if the emperor issued a decree against the reformer making fully effective the ban of the pope, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for him to save Luther from capture. The imperial edict came soon enough, but not until Luther had left Worms. It was dated the 8th of May, but was not issued until twenty days later. Its proclamation was postponed until after many of the members of the diet had taken their departure, and yet, when it was published, it purported to have the unanimous approval of the body. It was drawn by Alexander, one of the papal representatives, and was drastic enough to satisfy all the demands of the papacy. It put the ban and double ban upon Luther, and forbade all places and persons from sheltering him or aiding him in any way. All loyal subjects were commanded to arrest him and to deliver him up to the emperor, which of course meant his delivery to his Romish foes. If this imperial mandate had been executed Martin Luther the great reformer would also have been Martin Luther the martyr. Luther knew this. In his address before the Diet of Worms he made no whining appeal for mercy, and afterwards, in the exultation of soul that followed the hour of his trial and of his triumph as well, he declared that if he had a

hundred heads, he would suffer them all to be cut off before he would recant.

But the fact must be noted again that the Romish representatives and Charles, who was under their influence, showed a surprising degree of forbearance toward Luther. In the last chapter mention was made of the final effort to bring Luther to such concessions as would render it possible for the emperor to extend him his favor and protection. In this effort the Archbishop of Treves, a worthy ecclesiastic, had taken a leading part. Luther had appealed to a general council. The parties who conducted the negotiations with Luther offered to secure this, though they knew that the pope would not readily consent. Luther refused to submit to even the decision of the general council, if its decisions were not fully sustained by Scripture. In fact, it was his insistence on the authority of the Bible that finally determined the issue. "Why appeal to the Bible?" exclaimed Eck. "That is the source of all heresies." Alexander and Cochlæus, as well as other Romanists, took part in the various private conferences. The opinion Alexander entertained of Luther was fully expressed in the imperial edict, which he prepared. In this document Luther was characterized as Satan himself, a madman, a person who taught treason to the State and disloyalty and destruction to Christianity itself; in fact, the vocabulary of Romish denunciation was drawn upon in full measure to furnish epithets against the recalcitrant Luther.

Luther left Worms on the 26th of April (Friday morning). His safe-conduct allowed him twenty-one

days for his return journey, but forbade his preaching by the way. Much history had been made during those epochal days in Worms. Perhaps it would be too much to say that the fate of the great Reformation depended upon his decision and conduct before the diet. The movement had progressed so far now that its success or failure did not hinge upon any one man's life or death. It is not too much to say, however, that if Luther had yielded to the pressure brought to bear upon him at Worms (pressure of every conceivable sort) the mighty movement would have been retarded, though it could never have been defeated. Two factors usually control in all popular movements—personal leadership and the principles embodied in the movement. The outcome of a political or moral revolution is always uncertain when the personal element enters into it more than does the question of principle. The empire of Napoleon fell with his downfall. England returned by natural gravitation to the sway of the Stuarts after the death of Oliver Cromwell. Martin Luther, while the real leader of the Reformation, never aspired to leadership nor to place of prominence; and the truths for which he stood were always more powerful in the movement than was his personality. Hence as important as his leadership, that leadership was not absolutely essential to the movement at this stage of its history and henceforward.

Luther parted tenderly with his friends at Worms. Some score of them accompanied him as he took his leave of a place that would be famous in all the aftertime because of his fidelity to his convictions and his

sublime moral courage in the memorable scene before the great assembly of princes met there to decide his fate and the fate of the great Reformation. Sturm, a royal herald, accompanied him for some distance. This official was won over to the truth as Luther saw and taught it, and when Luther dismissed him the two embraced each other. Luther, like Paul, had won another Onesimus in bonds. All along the way Luther was received with distinguished honors. Churches were opened to him. At Hirschfield the abbot received him most affectionately, and he preached in the church despite the emperor's orders to the contrary. At Eisenach, too, he proclaimed the gospel to his old friends. The youth that had sung for his bread on the streets was now dispensing the bread of life to some, perhaps, who had been kind to him in the struggling days of his poverty.

After leaving Worms, Luther wrote a most respectful letter to the emperor. In it he defines his attitude toward the temporal powers in a way that harmonizes thoroughly with the teachings of Scripture. He assures Charles that he is willing to render him all possible obedience, the only limit to that obedience being the authority of God's Word. This contention and defense, as true and just as they were, and as manifestly so to us, could make no effective appeal to a man who had turned over the keeping of his conscience to a Church that refused then, as now, to recognize the supreme authority of the Bible.

He wrote a letter of similar import to the members of the diet, and thus to the German people. In a let-

ter to Spalatin he justifies his preaching, which was a clear violation of his instructions from the emperor, on the ground that the gospel cannot be restrained by any human authority.

Leaving Eisenach, he turned aside to see some of his father's relatives at Mohra. After a short stay with them, where he received a welcome that was especially grateful to his feelings at this time, he resumed his journey. He was accompanied by his brother James and Amsdorf, and one or two others. At a lonely spot in the Thuringian Forest, near an abandoned old chapel, where the road runs through a dark ravine following the winding course of a small stream, the company was suddenly set upon by a number of masked men, who with rough language demanded the surrender of Luther, and helped him, not too gently, to dismount from his vehicle. The other members of Luther's party fled precipitately, and the coachman used to tell how Luther himself was in such great haste that he left behind him a white hat he had been wearing. The coachman himself whipped his horses into a gallop and got away from the spot as fast as possible. The stories these fugitives told caused widespread alarm, and the impression became general that the enemies of Luther had captured and made way with him.

In the meantime Luther himself was well cared for. His captors furnished him a horse to ride, and proceeded, with many intentional wanderings through the woods so as to evade all possible pursuit, to the old castle of the Wartburg, which stood on a high hill over-

looking Eisenach, some eight miles away, and much of the surrounding country. The company reached this retreat about ten o'clock at night. Luther was much fatigued. He was not an experienced horseman, and this rough ride through the dark wood well-nigh exhausted him. Once he was allowed to dismount and rest on the ground a while, and he drank water from a spring which is still called Luther's spring.

The castle of the Wartburg, where Luther now found himself in quasi captivity, had a history of its own. It was five hundred years old. Here some centuries before a famous contest had taken place among the minnesingers, those wandering bards and musicians of the Middle Ages. Here Elizabeth, one of the most honored of the German saints of the Catholic Church, had lived in other days. Now it was to become for a memorable while the home and hiding-place of Martin Luther—his Patmos, as he called it. It was an ideal retreat. All about were forest-clad hills, with little valleys between, rejoicing now in the fast greening foliage of a German May, and ringing with the melody of birds—the nightingale and the lark and their companions—who had come again from the far south to make glad the summertime of the north. There were flowers, too, of which Luther was always fond, and the dawn and the stars looked into his room through windows that were more hospitable to the light than the windows of his monastery. He loved nature in all her moods and seasons. In day and night, in spring and summer and autumn and winter, in wood and field and stream, and in sky and cloud and storm

he saw the hand of God, and heard his voice in bird-songs, the murmur of the wind and brook, and the pealing thunders of the summer clouds echoing among the hills about the old castle.

And he was safe. As a knight-prisoner the emissaries of the pope and the officials of the emperor would not molest him. Only a few knew his whereabouts. This was Frederick's plan for saving him from the hands of the Romanists. Some have thought that even Luther himself did not know how all this came about; but this seems improbable. Indeed, it is practically certain that he was in the elector's confidence in the scheme, and that he was a willing captive in the hands of the best political friend he had ever had. All Germany wondered where he was. His friends charged the Romanists with foul play. A deeper resentment was thus aroused against those who had sought to crush him. In hiding he helped the cause more than in public.

His entertainment was royal. This son of a peasant had never fared so well in all his life before. His table was well supplied with substantials and dainties, and he says that two sons of noblemen served him at table. The poor ascetic was not accustomed to such a mode of life, to such luxuries and dainties, and evidently suffered from dyspepsia in consequence of his rich fare. Some of the traditions about his life here are not authentic. For instance, the old story about his seeing the devil and throwing his inkstand at him is not well sustained. But he certainly passed through many mental and spiritual struggles, some of which were

due to his unwonted indulgence in high living. Not many men have been wise enough always to distinguish between their depression or elation, superinduced by physical causes, and those purely spiritual states which are caused by influences that are outside the body itself. The religion of the nerves is largely even yet an unexplored realm. Some have regarded Luther's faith in the powers of Satan as excessively realistic; but it at least saved him from gross superstition. He heard strange noises in his room at night. A bag of nuts would become strangely active and noisy. Practical people have suggested that rats were the disturbing cause. Perhaps the rodents about the Wartburg were larger, because better fed, than those which infested the monastic quarters of Luther at Wittenberg. Luther discarded all such facts and conjectures and settled the matter at once by attributing the sounds to the devil himself. But he believed in the divine more than in the human and the diabolical, so he was saved from hopeless, helpless alarm. True faith is the only remedy for superstition; but true faith has had to shake off many a fungus growth.

Luther enjoyed great freedom at the castle. He left off his monkish garb, grew an ample beard, went hunting, and was so changed in appearance that his most intimate friends would hardly have known him. He dressed as a knight, wore a sword at his side, and was known as Squire George.

But he did something more than live a round of luxurious indolence. In no period of his life was he more active, and some of the monumental work of his

marvelous career was done during those months in this castle home.

It was several months after Luther's sequestration before his friends and his foes knew the place of his concealment. But it was not very long before his foes especially knew that he was neither dead nor dumb. He evidently had constant though clandestine communication with the outside world. He was in regular correspondence with Spalatin. He also wrote to many of his friends. He knew what was going on in the Churches, and he took the keenest possible interest in everything connected with the great movement. Many pamphlets and other publications found their way from his hiding place to the printer and to the people. Archbishop Albert had ventured to reinstitute the sale of indulgences, the proceeds of which were to furnish means for fighting the Turks. Luther assailed him fiercely. Albert replied in a mild letter, written with his own hand. The soft answer did not turn away Luther's wrath. He threatened that if the sale of indulgences was not discontinued he would publish a book he had written which was damaging to Albert. He sent this in manuscript to Frederick through Spalatin. They evidently thought the book too radical for publication. Luther grew impatient, and wrote a letter to Spalatin that was more positive than polite. The man had no cringing, fawning spirit in his nature. Possibly this was why some princes and nobles honored him. Men may love flattery, but they despise the flatterer.

The most important work done by Luther at the Wartburg (and he did hardly anything as important in

his whole life) was the translation of the Bible into the vernacular German. He did not complete this work here, but made a substantial beginning on the New Testament. This German New Testament was given to the German-speaking peoples in the autumn of the following year (1522). The whole Bible came later. With the Bible in the hands of the people, Rome could never again exercise supreme power in Germany. No people have ever become, and none have ever remained solidly, Catholic among whom the Bible has had free and unrestricted circulation. Such a thing is a moral impossibility. One can easily understand why Rome has made so many bonfires out of Bibles.

Luther's German Bible gave permanency to the German language. The contention of Max Müller that a language must grow or die may be more than a half truth; but the growth of language, like all other growths, must gather about a nucleus of life. Luther's Bible gave that nucleus to the German language. In making his translation he was controlled by one very important principle: he and his helpers did not make a literal translation of the Greek and Hebrew Bible into German. Every language has its idioms. Literal translations may help scholars and students, but they do not help the common people. More than one modern translation of the Bible has been marred by an effort to turn Greek and Hebrew idioms into English or German.

The weeks and months went by. Luther naturally grew impatient. The battle was raging, and he longed to take a hand in it. But the elector restrained him. He was free to go where he chose inside the enclosure

about the castle, but when he went outside he was attended by one of the castle guards, who kept a sort of watch over him. This attendant protected him from danger, and prevented him from gratifying an impulse that came to him more than once to throw himself into the struggle that he knew was going on. But he had his recreations. He gathered strawberries. He found interest in birds and plants and trees. In August he went with his friend on a two-day hunt. "We caught a few hares and partridges," he says; "a pretty occupation for idle people." A poor hare, chased by the hounds, found temporary shelter in his sleeve. Afterwards the dogs captured it, and Luther reasoned about it after his usual manner. Poor hares were like poor human beings that were constantly falling into the hands of the devil.

The great Reformation went on apace, and the master hand that had set the movement going was needed to guide it in its course. The doings of the diet were published in great broadsheets, with wood cuts and Luther's defense in full, and were circulated by thousands. Men read and admired and opened their eyes in amazement. After all, then, the pope was no God, and the Romish hierarchy was not omnipotent. "Luther had smitten the idol, and men saw that it was only a painted image." Men laugh at their own superstitions when the fear is gone. The danger now was not reversion but revulsion. Dissolution and destruction are always more rapid than construction. Institutions a thousand years old perished in a day. The monasteries were deserted. Monks and nuns quit their cloisters.

Priests began to marry. The spirit of independence was everywhere. The tie that bound men to Rome was their superstition. This was broken forever in Germany. Other nations were casting off the bond. Luther, now a quasi prisoner, had unwittingly set many another prisoner free. Men went farther than Luther had gone. In future his hand was more frequently on the brake and on the reverse lever than on the throttle.

In many churches the mass was discontinued or turned into the simple communion of the Lord's Supper. Men were learning that the sacred emblems were only emblems, and not realities. In some churches the cup was given to the laity. The doctrine of transubstantiation (a doctrine so revolting in its every suggestion as to cause one to wonder why any one had ever believed it, and wonder more why men still endure it) was giving place to a more reasonable and scriptural conception of this sacrament. Luther himself was handicapped to some extent by the old superstition with reference to this ordinance through his whole life. His doctrine of consubstantiation was a sort of compromise between his common sense and his lifelong disposition, sometimes leading him to extremes, to take the Bible literally.

But all these changes did not take place during Luther's detention in the Wartburg. The full current was sweeping his followers onward when at last it was considered safe for him to return to his old place. He visited Wittenberg in disguise in December, but found that it would not be prudent to reveal his identity. What was passing here and elsewhere made him chafe

under his confinement. His old colleague, Karlstadt, and the Augustine monk, Zwilling, were true to the spirit of the Reformation, but they were too fanatical to be safe leaders. Melanchthon was too conservative to consent to their contentions, but not quite strong enough to withstand them. Wittenberg was the seething center of the great ferment that was going on. Some violence had been shown in the breaking up of the monasteries there. Of course Luther did not approve this. He never sanctioned any sort of violence in defense of the gospel and the Church. Karlstadt insisted that it was not only the privilege of the clergy to marry, but it was their imperative duty to do so. The laity were not only entitled to receive the communion in both kinds, but it was a sin not to give it to them thus. The Saviour administered the sacrament to only twelve; only twelve should be served with it at one time.. These and other notions were among the doctrines held forth by these zealous adherents of the Lutheran movement. About some of these teachings Luther held very decided convictions; about some of them he was not as yet so clear in his faith. With all his apparent precipitancy, he was never a rash man. He usually reached his conclusions after full investigation. He was not given to hasty deductions from half truths. The great truths of the Reformation did not come to him like flashlights in midnight darkness, but dawned upon him as the day comes.

Matters grew more serious at Wittenberg. Karlstadt and his associates were making trouble. The spirit of fanaticism was abroad. It is always in evi-

dence in times of political and religious excitement. About Christmas time three men from Zwickau, the headquarters of Thomas Münzer (whom we shall meet again in this history), came to the city. These individuals claimed personal inspiration. They had a later message from the Lord than that given through the apostles. They also claimed the power to work miracles, though history does not credit them with any special healings or cures of the sick. Of course some were deceived. The passing of the old faith, in the case of many, made them ready for anything that was new. The pendulum of credulity finds an easy swing from superstition to fanaticism. All these things disturbed Luther because he felt that they were making the work of the Reformation fruitless, or, worse still, turning the wheat into tares. He determined at all hazards to return to Wittenberg. The elector protested, but Luther persisted. He told his good friend through Spalatin that he would assume all the responsibility for going himself. He told Frederick, too, that his faith was in God and exhorted that prince to rely upon the same protection.

He left the Wartburg on the first of March, 1522. He traveled incognito, of course, and in disguise. But at one of the inns where he stopped to spend a night the landlord recognized him, but did not make him known except in a confidential way to a few individuals. Among these were two Swiss students *en route* to Wittenberg. One of these was a young man named Kessler. Luther fascinated these youths with his easy manners and gracious ways. Kessler thus de-

scribes him: "When I saw Martin, in 1522, he was somewhat stout but upright, bending backward rather than stooping, with a face upturned to heaven. His deep, dark eyes, . . . twinkled and sparkled like stars, so that one could hardly look steadily at them." It will be remembered that all of Luther's portraits give him this position, with his head thrown back.

Luther made his journey to Wittenberg in safety, reaching there after several days' travel. His friends greeted him with the warmest affection. All who really loved the cause for which he had stood so courageously realized that whatever might be the personal risk to himself involved in a residence at Wittenberg, his coming was critically opportune. In this connection it may be stated once for all that while the ecclesiastical and civil bans were over him for many years, he was never molested. His history was a paradox. A political and spiritual outlaw, he yet went on with his work for the State and the Church. Moody at times, as was only natural, considering the fact that for a good part of his life he never knew what absolute personal safety meant, he never became the unfortunate victim of chronic bitterness and cynicism. The spirit of the man through all these trying years was a marvelous triumph of strong will, strong faith, and the grace of God.

Luther took quick and vigorous hold of the situation at Wittenberg. Now the moderation of the man began to manifest itself. He warned his people against the lack of charity which caused contentions about indifferent things. He was tender toward the weak, whose

faith yet needed the support of much that was in the old order of things. It seemed that he would almost restore the full forms and ceremonials so familiar to the people in the days of Rome's undisputed sway. He himself went back to his home in the monastery, and took up much of his old life there. He even put on his monk's garb once more. This he wore until it was worn out, and then put on a suit made from a piece of cloth given him by the elector. He soon disposed of the prophets from Zwickau, counteracted the influence of Karlstadt and his associates, and brought peace and order out of strife and confusion.

And he was a busy man. He threw himself into his work with all the tremendous energy of his now matured manhood. All this time, and for years afterward, he had no thought or purpose of forming a new ecclesiastical organization. He sought to reform and not to recast existing institutions. The dominant force in his own life was the Bible, and he believed that the dominant force in the Reformation should be the Bible. With this read and understood and preached and accepted, all would come right. Without this, nothing could be made right.

CHAPTER XV.

Luther and the Peasants' War.

Luther's activities were manifold. He resumed his lectures at the university. He appeared in his same old pulpit the next Sunday after he returned from the Wartburg. For the whole of the following week he preached every day, earnestly warning the people against intolerance. "You can talk well enough," he said; "but cannot a donkey sing his little lesson? I see no signs of charity in you." And he preached at other places. At Zwickau, the home of the prophets, he preached from the balcony of the town hall to twenty-five thousand people. Everywhere the people heard him gladly. At Weimar, at Erfurt, and at other places he proclaimed the newly found gospel. His influence was constantly spreading. Condemned by Church and State, he yet went forth a spiritual conqueror, pulling down the strongholds of sin with the Word of God.

To Hartmuth von Kronberg, a son-in-law of Von Sickingen, he wrote an open letter, in which he made known to the nobleman and through him to all Germany the fact that he was again at Wittenberg, though he admitted that he did not know how long he would stay there. In this letter he spoke in detail of his experience at Worms, and condemned the way in which the diet had refused to allow the Bible to have any weight with it in dealing with him. It was a sin of the

German nation, since the heads of the nation had done it.

The great work of this year, however, as we have already seen, was the publication of the German New Testament. September 21, 1522 is remembered as the day on which this epoch-making book made its appearance. By December a new edition was called for. The people read it with devout and devouring interest. Cochlæus, the Romish theologian, declared that the Lutheran followers were more diligent in the study of the German New Testament than the priests were in the study of the Latin Vulgate. Women and shoemakers and people of all classes, he said, read it so much that they were ready to argue not only with Catholic laymen but even with priests. The authorities took notice of the book, and ordered it confiscated. Of course it was not safe to allow a publication so dangerous to Romanism to have free and unrestricted circulation. Catholic scholars criticised the translation, but years afterward, when a rival translation was published by authority of the Romish hierarchy, it was largely a transcript of the Lutheran translation.

The printing press was one of the chief means of the Protestant propaganda. Luther used it diligently and effectively. His pen, if not made, according to Frederick's dream, from a quill plucked from a Bohemian goose a hundred years old, was nevertheless prolific and perennial. It was quickly sharpened when there was any need for more defense of the principles for which he contended or attacks upon the errors of Romanism.

But his writing was not limited to these fields. He was quick to see the spiritual needs of the people. "I was born for my dear Germans," he said, "and will never cease to work for them."

About this time he published a really notable work on the relations between Church and State, or, more correctly speaking, on the duties of Christians in their relations to the civil power. This work set forth fundamentally the principles universally recognized by Protestants to-day. And what is even more remarkable, the logic of its positions would even then have separated Church and State. The errors and ills of Romanism and of Protestantism in many lands and centuries have been due in no small measure to the effort to unify civil and ecclesiastical power. The Church has but confessed its own weakness when it has sought to lay hands upon the strong arm of the State. More, it shows an unholy ambition, utterly foreign to the spirit of Jesus Christ, who said: "My kingdom is not of this world." There were errors enough in the Church during the fourth century, and it did not need the assistance of Constantine, whom Romish writers have invested with more greatness and sanctity than he ever possessed. Of course separation of Church and State could not come in Luther's day. Such a change would have been too radical. It probably did not enter his own mind as a possibility. His mission was to sow the seed and do what reaping he could of the slowly maturing harvest. The fuller, richer harvest would come in the after ages. But the constant marvel is that he had discovered so many seeds of vital truth, and that he

had the courage to sow them, likewise the wisdom and the faith.

His opponents found him a ready controversialist. He was ready at any time to take up the gage of battle. Much of his controversial writings at this time were pertinent to the issues involved, but need not receive specific mention here. Two of his controversies, however, are of historic interest. One of these was with Henry VIII., of England. That royal polygamist, whose uxorial proclivities had not as yet run counter to his Romish principles, ventured into the field of controversy against Luther. His attack was more kingly in name than in quality. Luther's answer was sharp-edged. He in effect charges Henry with merely begging the question. To bring forward the decretals of popes and the dogmas of councils as final on any question was assuming the very question at issue. It yet remained for Henry to disprove the old proverb: "All kings are fools."

The Catholics complained that a serious mistake had been made at the Diet of Worms in the failure to have some Catholic divine there who could cope with Luther in argument. Evidently the little Wittenberg doctor was too much for those who had entered the lists against him. It was essential that every capable defender of the faith should take up the battle against Luther. Erasmus, always wary, a believer in the newly discovered learning, but not a believer in the new evangelism, at least to the extent of committing himself unreservedly to it, was urged to take up matters with Luther. Kings urged him to do so. Erasmus

was too shrewd to take up the main contention with Luther, so he attacked him on the less vital and more academic question of the freedom of the will. The argument of Erasmus, so far as there was any argument, was in favor of what has been known in after times as Arminianism. Luther's views, as we have seen, were colored with Augustinianism. The controversy was characterized by the bitterness of the times, and led to a rupture between the two men which was never fully healed. In all that Luther said on this mooted question he was duly mindful that it involved divine things too deeply to be handled lightly and irreverently. He was practical in all his thoughts. He believed in human responsibility, and believed in it so strongly that he did not allow any merely abstract question of theology to overshadow it. The one test of faith with him was its effect on life and conduct. Hence he had little time and less taste for discussing questions which he conceived had no direct bearing on these vital fruits of faith.

The work of the Reformation went forward with gathering strength. In 1523 Prussia broke finally with the pope, and thus became the first Protestant State. Denmark followed a little later, and in the course of a few years Sweden and Norway followed. A light more brilliant and enduring than the aurora borealis was breaking over these northern lands. In the Low Countries, where Charles had hereditary possessions, the gospel was preached and believed, and here the first martyr's blood of the Christian era was shed. The great movement must needs have its baptism of fire

and blood. The names of the proto-martyrs of the great Reformation were Henry Voes and John Esch. These young Augustine monks had gone into Holland to preach the gospel as Luther and his followers understood it. They were apprehended by the authorities and publicly burned at the stake. Luther was deeply stirred by the fate of these faithful witnesses to the truth. He wondered why the Master had not put the honor of martyrdom upon himself, and not upon these young men. Under the solemn yet joyous inspiration of this blood christening of the movement for which he was himself ready at any time to lay down his life, he wrote his first verses, which were an elegy to the memory of the young heroes of the faith, and also a martial call to the Church to meet courageously the battle that was on. These historic lines begin:

A new song will we raise to him
  Who ruleth, God our Lord;
And we will sing what God hath done
  In honor of his word.

And then, after referring to the fate of the martyrs, he concludes with this trumpet blast:

So let us thank our God to see
  His Word returned at last.
The summer now is at the door,
  The winter is fore-past.
The tender flowerlets bloom anew,
  And he who hath begun
Will give his work a happy end.

It was about this time that Luther turned his attention to providing hymns for the people. The early

Christians sang, as we know from the testimony of the apostles themselves and from the report made to the Roman emperor by Pliny the Younger. But through the Middle Ages Rome had discouraged congregational singing. She relegated this important part of public worship to choir boys and others specially designated for the purpose, and the singing was done in Latin, a language utterly foreign to the common people. For a thousand years the voice of song had been silent in the Church, with only an occasional outburst of sacred melody. It is not surprising that spiritual life reached its slowest pulse. When the Church's praying is done by priests and preachers, and its singing is done by choirs, however grand the chant or anthem, spirituality wanes to its death.

Now and then through these silent centuries (for God hath never left himself without witnesses) some prophet-poet would burst away from the superstitious songs to Mary and the saints and sing a song of faith and devotion to Jesus himself, or give voice to some other devout Christian sentiment. In the twelfth century Bernard of Clairvaux burst forth with that faith song of the Church,

> Of him who did salvation bring,
> I could forever think and sing,

and a little later Bernard of Cluny sang of "Jerusalem the Golden." The Franciscan monk, Thomas of Celano, sang of the terrors of the last day in verses which have been rendered into English by Sir Walter Scott,

John Newton, and Dean Stanley, the first of these versions beginning,

> The day of wrath, that dreadful day,
> When heaven and earth shall pass away,
> What power shall be the sinner's stay?
> How shall he meet that dreadful day?

These and a few others are like pearls gathered from the rubbish of the Middle Ages. The Lutheran age gave many more hymns to the Church than a thousand years of Romanism had given, and the age of Watts and Wesley a hundredfold more.

Martin Luther was a spiritual seer. He saw the need of the Church for sacred song. He was not a poet himself, although under the inspiration of the mighty impulse that was stirring his own soul, as well as the soul of the age, he wrote some verses that will never die. But he soon gathered about him men who, like ancient David and Asaph, could praise the Lord in song. The German language is rich in hymnology—treasures gathered during the days of Luther, also from succeeding generations, and especially from the Moravians.

Luther published his first German hymn book in 1524. It was only a small volume, containing less than two dozen hymns. But others and larger ones came later. Luther never wrote more than thirty or forty hymns, and some of them were not specially notable for poetic or hymnic merit. But at least two of these have found their way into English and other tongues, and one of them has never been surpassed as an ex-

pression of unconquerable faith in God. This is his famous version of the forty-sixth Psalm, and reference has already been made to it. This is the first verse of this famous epic:

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper he, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

This hymn was written in 1526. Every line of it throbs with the heartbeats of the man who was standing for God and the truth. Sometimes, when tempted to be discouraged, he would say to Melanchthon: "Philip, let us sing the forty-sixth Psalm" (meaning this hymn).

The other of the two hymns to which reference has been made is a Christmas carol, and is itself a translation from the Latin. It is very tender. This is the first verse in English:

To us this day a Child is given,
To crown us with the joy of heaven;
Good news from heaven the angels bring,
Glad tidings to the earth they sing.

. . . . . .

Luther went on with his work, but his enemies did not relax their efforts against him. Hadrian followed Leo upon the papal throne. He was too pious to be a popular pope in Rome, too reactionary in his policies to be an acceptable pope in the sixteenth century, and

too stupid to be a good pope at any time. He broke out in coarse personal attacks against Luther. He called the reformer a drunkard and other like names. His German enemies said this about Luther, and of course the infallible holy father believed what they said. Luther dismissed the matter with a simple remark that Hadrian was an ass. The pope demanded the execution of the decree of the Diet of Worms. Charles, through his representative, made the same demand on the diet which met in Nuremburg in 1524. That body, anticipating by some centuries the doings of the "Circumlocution Office," pledged itself to carry out the decree in words that were simply a subterfuge. No German diet would even condemn Martin Luther again. And Charles was too busy with his wars with France and other pressing interests of his great dominion to give heed or time to the croakings of the papacy. He had enough war on his hands, without embroiling himself with his German subjects. He was wise enough to see that the movement involved many others besides Luther.

Luther said in a letter to a friend that as hard as his enemies had hit him, they had not hit him so hard as his own people. And he was to realize this now as never before. In 1524, and especially in the early part of 1525, some of the bloodiest chapters in all human history were written. What came to pass was only the natural result of the forces at work. Winter seldom passes into spring and summer without storms. The lightning flash may restore the electric equilibrium and purify the air, but it may likewise rend the ancient oak

or strike down a human being as it passes from the cloud to the earth. Luther was a man of peace, and counseled moderation and even championed the doctrine of nonresistance. But the doctrines he taught and the truths for which he stood in the restless age in which he lived, could but produce social and civil convulsions.

Men practiced all sorts of fanatical vagaries. Karlstadt discarded all clerical garb, dressed like a peasant, called himself "Brother Andrew," and hauled manure barefooted. His views were what we should call socialistic. He found much authority for his contentions in the Old Testament. He would model the State after the manner of the Jewish theocracy. Luther was asked to give his views touching this matter. He wrote on the subject, taking the position that God in establishing the Jewish state meant simply to educate men, and not to establish a form of government after which all governments should be fashioned absolutely. The Jewish national economy was no more binding that the Jewish law with reference to what should and should not be eaten. With his characteristic clearness of perception he set forth the difference between the literal and the spiritual in law.

But a more dangerous fanatic than Karlstadt appeared. This was Thomas Münzer, the Anabaptist. Münzer had taken his master's degree at Wittenberg, and had for a time been an acceptable Lutheran preacher. Later he went into mysticism of the most pronounced and dangerous sort. He claimed to have direct revelations from the Lord. Believing his vagaries himself, no doubt, he persuaded others to accept them.

He felt called upon and mightily moved to establish a "kingdom of the saints." This kingdom was not to be spiritual, but temporal. All things were to be in common. The enemies of the Lord (by which he meant all those who opposed his schemes) were to be dealt with as the Israelites had dealt with the Canaanites. Such incendiarism in the name of religion could but produce insurrection. This was as inevitable as is an explosion when fire touches powder.

Naturally enough the poorer classes were readiest to accept these doctrines. It was an age of oppression. The old feudal system was tottering to its fall, but it was never worse in all its history than now. The peasant class were nothing better than serfs. Dignitaries of Church and State lived in luxury, and wrung taxes from the poor to support their indolence and self-indulgence. The exactions and oppressions grew worse as time went on. Men in semi-beggary, with families suffering for the necessities of life, groaned in spirit and longed for relief. It was the age when man's cruelty to man assuredly made countless thousands mourn. The Church not only showed no sympathy; it was as oppressive as the nobles, if not more so. And the reformers taught the people that Rome was a tyrant, exercising powers that God had never given to the Church. Men woke up to thoughts and aspirations they had never known before. They thought of freedom, and thus thinking, became anarchists. The Peasants' War broke out.

For some time before this there had been much restlessness as well as numerous outbreaks. The "League of the Shoe" had been formed. The disturbances had

been frequent in southern Germany. Now the agitation spread to all parts of the empire. Luther saw the danger, and uttered a warning against it. He had spoken sharply to Karlstadt and his associates concerning the reckless way in which they had torn down images in the churches and inaugurated other innovations. He did not believe in images, but he did believe in law and order, and contended that all things should be done (all reforms carried out) in a lawful way. He sought to act as mediator. At Easter in 1525 he wrote what he hoped would be a conciliatory letter to the people. He urged the peasants, "his brethren," to refrain from violence. But his words were not sufficient to allay the storm. Fire and bloodshed had already begun. The peasant bands carried the sword and firebrand wherever they went. Convents and castles were given to pillage and the flames. The advocates of freedom became a lawless mob. Münzer himself joined the rioters and became their leader. Luther counseled decisive measures against these "human devils." The Saxon princes, Philip of Hesse, the Duke of Brunswick, and some others united forces against the insurgents. On the fifteenth of May a decisive battle was fought at Frankenhausen between the government forces and the rabble army under Münzer. The peasants were completely routed and Münzer was made prisoner. Later he was ingloriously beheaded, dying in abject cowardice.

Engagements at other points resulted in similar defeats for the poor peasants. It is said that, first and last, 150,000 of them perished; and after this fear-

ful sacrifice of life, leaving whole communities desolated in some cases, the condition of the peasants was not made better, but worse. This was a struggle for freedom, one of the first of the many that have come since then, and ought to have had a different result. Before the final defeat of the uprising the leaders put forth demands which were reasonable enough. They asked the right to choose their own pastors in villages, to be allowed access to the forests and streams for hunting and fishing, that a portion of the tithes be applied to the relief of the poor, and that serfdom be abolished. Their demands were not outside reasonable human rights, but the methods they employed to secure these demands were so revolutionary that they lost the sympathy of all conservative people.

Luther has been sharply criticised in connection with this unfortunate outburst. He has been charged with responsibility for it. Unquestionably the principles of the great Reformation were largely effective in bringing about this attempted revolution. Many things that Luther had said put specious pleas in the mouths of the revolutionists in defense of their course. He had not spared rulers in his strictures upon the times and the evils of the times, and he had condemned the unjust oppressions of the people in his own uncompromising way. But it is one thing to condemn unjust laws and unjust rulers, and quite a different thing to condemn all government. Paul did not approve the crimes of the human monster, the Emperor Nero; and yet he wrote to the Romans that "the powers that be are of God." Luther was never a rebel against rightful authority.

He obeyed the law himself, and taught others to obey it. His critics say that he really began the movement, but that when it was under full headway he deserted it, and, like Pilate, sought to wash his hands of all responsibility. But he never counseled or countenanced violence, even in defense of right. When he was haled before the Diet of Worms, if he had only spoken the word, many brave men would have sprung to his defense. Instead of this, he went like a sheep to the slaughter. When the struggle burst upon Germany, he could not consistently take sides with the peasants. Compromise was impossible, and so there was nothing for him but to take his stand with the authorities.

After the struggle was over, Luther did what he could to secure clemency for the poor peasants. It was fortunate for him and them that the army that had won the victory was Protestant and not Romanist. Had it been the latter, his own fate would have been what Rome had long wished it to be, and his good offices would have availed nothing in behalf of the defeated rebels.

While the Peasants' War was just beginning Frederick the Wise passed away. When he realized that his end was near he sent for Luther. The latter hastened to his bedside, but before he could reach his dying friend Frederick had passed away in peace. It has been stated already that Frederick never openly left the Romish Church, but when he was dying he accepted the communion in both kinds and refused to receive extreme unction. It is evident from this that at heart he accepted the Lutheran doctrines.

He was well called "the Wise." He was one of the first princes in all Europe, if not the very first, that stood for religious toleration. Had his attitude toward Luther been in full accord with the spirit of the Catholic Church the great Reformation would have come, but its coming would have cost immeasurably more bloodshed. Well may Protestants honor his memory. All Christians may find in his life and reign a part of that wondrous providence that attended every stage of the great moral and religious forward movement of the Church in the sixteenth century and every step of the man who was commissioned of heaven to lead this movement.

CHAPTER XVI.

Luther's Marriage.

It is pleasant to turn from the Peasants' War, with its record of blood and slaughter, to one of the most important and at the same time one of the happiest events in the whole life of Martin Luther.

On June 13, 1525, Tuesday evening, he was married to Katharina von Bora. The German summer was in its fullness of beauty. The harvest time had not yet come, but the flowers were blooming, roses were in the gardens, the nightingale was singing, the lark was abroad by early dawn, and the stork, always welcome to the dwellers of the Far North, had built its nest on many roofs. The long June twilight must have given brightness even to the dull apartments of Martin Luther in the Augustine monastery at Wittenberg, where for many years he had found shelter, and where now he was to find a home.

The marriage was very quiet. It was solemnized by Bugenhagen, the parish priest. Cranach, the artist, and his wife, Justus Jonas, one of the professors in the university, and for many years a most intimate friend of the reformer, and Apel, the professor of law, who had himself married a nun—these were the invited guests. Melanchthon was not in the company. Luther knew that the last named individual would not approve the step that he was taking; and one wants only sympathetic friends present when he marries.

A fortnight later a larger company gathered on invitation of Luther to celebrate the marriage in a more public way. Among the guests were his venerable father and mother. Hans Luther had always wished Martin to marry, and it is easy to imagine how happy the old man and his wife were when they saw their son wedded to a good, noble woman.

Luther's bride had had a history of her own. She belonged to a noble German family. Like many other aristocratic people, however, her kindred seem to have had more good blood than money; and like other families similarly situated, they had sought shelter and respectability for their daughter Katharina in a nunnery. She was placed in one of these establishments when only nine years old. At sixteen she took the vows of a nun. She declared afterwards that she did not know the meaning of these vows when she assumed them. How could she? The light of the Reformation penetrated into many a dark corner where the light had never shone before, and to many this light brought a vision of life and liberty such as they had never seen before. This light entered the convent of Nimptschen, situated near the Saxon town of Grimma, and with its coming restlessness entered the hearts of the inmates. No normal woman whose history or training has not warped her ideas of life would ever seek a nunnery. When Katharina von Bora and her companions understood the better way their cloisters became their prison. They determined to free themselves from a life which had no joys in it, and now, since they knew more fully what religion really was, did not even possess the merit

of duty. But whither should they go? They appealed to their relatives. These refused to give them a home or any assistance. But they were not discouraged. Aided by a town official, nine of the inmates made their escape. It was quite natural that they should make their way to Wittenberg and throw themselves upon the generosity of Martin Luther and his friends. This was two years before Luther married Katharina, one of these escaped nuns. Luther took the fugitives under his protection, and solicited money to provide for their wants until other arrangements could be made for them. Katharina von Bora found a home in the house of the burgomaster of Wittenberg. Luther took a deep interest in these wards of his. Some of them married, and all were cared for in a way that saved them from want.

Luther confessed afterwards that he did not like Katharina at first. He thought she was haughty. Possibly the fact that she belonged to a family that was socially above his own caused him to think this. Possibly, too, this very opinion of Katharina had something to do with the beginnings of Luther's love for her. Men like to win the love of women; and a man of Luther's temperament would not likely love a woman whose nature did not present something like opposition to his wishes. That he came to love her devotedly there can be no doubt. He was forty-one when he married her, and she was twenty-six. This difference in age seemed only to enhance his affection for his Katie, as he called her. The maturity of his manhood and all the loneliness and unconscious self-de-

nial of his years as a monastic entered into his love for his wife. Every great experience of life brings to men's knowledge a part of themselves of which they had no consciousness before, or at most only half consciousness; and Martin Luther, like many another good man, found a joy in marriage of which he never dreamed. No wonder that after a year with his Katharina he declared that he would rather have her and poverty than all the world without her.

The picture of Katharina made by Cranach, one of the guests at the marriage, does not show a face of great beauty. Character faces are rarely beautiful, and hers was a character face. A brow that was not too prominent, large eyes, a nose that was a bit stubby, lips that could close firmly, a chin that was a little pointed, and a general contour of features that indicated individuality and decision—these are the characteristics of a face that looks at you through the portrait drawn by this personal friend of the family. The more you study the face the more impressed you are with it, and you would say that Katharina would improve with acquaintance. And this was no doubt so. It is true with most good people. She was a true, warm-hearted, well-proportioned German woman, well calculated and quite willing to make for herself and her husband a good home, a place and a state neither of them had really had since childhood.

As already stated, the real wedding feast came two weeks later. Luther in inviting his friends told them that he wanted them to come and "ratify the marriage" and "pronounce the benediction." There were rings

and other tokens, some of which are still preserved with loyal reverence in various institutions. The university presented the bridal couple with a silver goblet on which were engraved the words: "The honorable University of the electoral town of Wittenberg presents this wedding gift to Doctor Martin Luther and Kethe von Bora." The wedding ring bears the image of the Saviour and a miniature picture of the cross.

The newly married couple, as related before, went to housekeeping in the old Augustine monastery. The monks of this particular institution had years before taken their departure. Some of them entered the ministry, others took up secular pursuits, and Luther and a single companion were left as the sole occupants of the monastery. Luther had reported the matter to Frederick, and through Spalatin had turned over the building to the elector. The latter had donated it to the university, and so Luther continued to live there long after his companions had departed. His only companion for many months, except possibly a chance visitor, was the young man already mentioned. He had entered the monastic life to find peace with God, and now the gospel he had preached to others had made him more of a hermit than ever before in all his life. The energetic Katharina found plenty of work to do during the honeymoon in setting things to rights in this old establishment long occupied by men only.

Luther's marriage created a great stir. Friends and foes united in criticising the step. Melanchthon, while admitting that marriage was a holy estate (he could

hardly do otherwise, since he was himself a married man), thought Luther had lowered himself, and that, too, at a crisis in the great Reformation when he was needed most. And of course gossips and slanderers found sweet morsels in the affair. A man who had unsparingly criticised and condemned unchastity in the priests, and who had himself up to this time escaped even the breath of suspicion, was the center now of those moral vultures who cannot even wait for the death and decay of their victim, but must needs use their filthy beaks on living beings. And even to this day Catholic priests charge Martin Luther with the seduction of Katharina von Bora, the nun. They have been known to assert that this was, forsooth, the reason why Martin Luther left the Catholic Church! If this had been true, and others who were guilty of the same sin had gone with him, the number of Protestants might have been larger than it was. And if the dictum of Jesus had been observed, possibly some of the critics of Luther would have thrown no stones. Moral impurity was certainly no reason for leaving the Romish Church in the days of Martin Luther; and unless the testimony of all witnesses is utterly discredited and discarded, there is still little reason for such a thing in exclusively Catholic countries. In the time of Martin Luther the Romish Church, from the pope down, was shot through and through with this moral poison. The memory of the Borgias—the one a pope, also the father of a large family, the other, once a cardinal but released by his father the pope from his celibate vows and afterwards entering the married state—was still

fresh in the minds of men; for they had not been dead more than a quarter of a century. Concubinage was common, almost universal, among the priests. No priest could openly take a wife, but many of them played hide and seek with what conscience they had by taking mistresses. Regulations touching the concubinage of the priests had been adopted in some parts of Europe. The publication touching Albert which Luther had threatened to make, to which reference has already been made, charged this papal general agent for the indulgences in Germany with gross immorality. This unpleasant subject may be dismissed with the simple statement, which is borne out by reason and facts, that the celibate priesthood has been the curse of the Catholic Church. The Romish doctrine of marriage is inconsistent. If, as Catholics claim, marriage is a sacrament, why deny it to the priests?

No marriage in all history has been more discussed than Martin Luther's. Grave historians and theologians have discussed it. Biographers, partial and prejudiced, have given it careful consideration. Men have speculated about it. Various explanations have been brought forward to account for it. Michelet, the French historian, advances the theory that Luther's mind had been weakened by his constant anxiety through so many years, and by the repeated shocks he had suffered, and that in consequence of this semidementia he was not responsible for the folly of marriage! This explanation has at least the merit of originality. It is about as meritorious as this same author's effort to account for Luther's spiritual struggles. These con-

flicts, he thinks, were due to the dark age in which Luther lived, and are unknown to people of a later generation.

Luther's marriage really needed no defense or explanation. In ordinary discussions the burden of proof is on the affirmative. In marriage, as well as in other vital questions, the proof must come from the negative. The reasons for marriage exist in human nature and human society. It is the privilege, if not the duty, of every healthy human being capable of meeting the manifold obligations of matrimony to marry. There are reasons why some persons should not enter this state, but these should be more weighty than whim or pride or even the unauthorized prohibition of the Church. Whenever the exactions of social standing or the false teachings of ecclesiasticism put a discount on matrimony the home, the Church, and the State suffer vitally.

There was really no ethical question involved in Luther's marriage. Of course he had taken a life-long pledge to celibacy and chastity. The latter pledge simply recognized an obligation that existed without a pledge. The former was a part of his pledge as a member of the Augustine order, and later as a Catholic priest. If any part of these monastic and priestly vows was binding, every part was binding. He had made the most sacred promises to obey the pope. Fidelity to these promises would have forever barred the way to his becoming a reformer. If his celibate vow could righteously restrain him from marriage, his priestly vows would have bound him to lifelong loyalty to the

pope and the Catholic Church. His excommunication by the pope freed him from the latter; it likewise freed him from the former. Luther so regarded the matter, and his hesitancy about marrying was not based on moral grounds.

As to the expediency of Luther's marriage, there was room for doubt on his own part as well as on the part of his friends. The times were troublous. Uncertainty, deep and ominous, hung over his own future and that of the cause he had championed. He was under civil and ecclesiastical ban. His unfailing friend, the good Frederick, was no more. John, the new elector, was favorably disposed toward him, but he lacked the prestige and the influence of Frederick. Luther himself believed that the end of the world was at hand. Besides, the step would inevitably subject him to criticism, and that, too, at a time when the Protestant movement needed unity of spirit and purpose. Many of his friends would be offended. Luther knew all these things, but grew desperate at last, and declared that he would "marry his Katie in spite of the devil." He said he hoped the angels would laugh and the devil weep when they knew about it.

Undoubtedly his mind underwent a complete change in this matter so far as his own marriage was concerned. To every suggestion that he should marry he had but one answer: he would not do so. This was his repeated declaration. He believed in the marriage of the ministry, but he did not claim the right for himself. But a change came, came suddenly, and he married Katharina von Bora.

There are some things into which one does not care to inquire too closely. Some of the best and most sacred things in life are too subtle for analysis. It is not necessary that one should know the number of the rose's petals or the degrees covered by a rainbow or the distance of a star to see the beauty in star and rainbow and flower. Marriage is severely practical, but the beginnings of true matrimony are found in love; and who can weigh or measure love? Luther argued with himself before and after his marriage, and with his friends as well, and gave various reasons why he should take the step; but, after all, the real reason was that he loved Katharina von Bora. And this love for the woman who had sought his protection when she fled from the convent was as much a part of the wondrous providence of his divinely directed life as any other part of it, and it was only natural. For twenty years he had been an inmate of a monastery. His was a social nature. He loved home, he loved friends, he loved children, but he knew nothing of the joys of these natural affections except the lack of them. The loneliness of his life was intense; after a while it became intolerable. From a mistaken sense of duty he had denied to himself the domestic happiness which God had never refused him. He would do so no longer.

Luther's domestic life was thoroughly happy. No better wife for him could have been found in all the world. Katharina was strong, cheerful, and sympathetic. The wealth of her woman's nature, hoarded up from her childhood, was given fully to her husband.

She had hardly known before what it was to love and be loved. Rosaries and crucifixes, prayers and fasts, cells and unbroken routine cannot satisfy the normal child or woman. Materialistic affection may be an evil, but after all, the man or woman who does not love the material will not love the spiritual. Katharina was not merely like a bird out of a cage; she was like a bird which, liberated, finds its mate, and the two mingle together their song of joy and love.

The newly married couple were poor. Luther's income was scant enough. He had written books enough, and they had been sold in sufficiently large editions to have made him a rich man if he had only received a moderate royalty on the sales. But somehow, possibly because he was not worldly wise and because he was really writing to help others, he seems to have received little if anything from their sale.

The practical Katharina must have found his domestic establishment greatly in need of attention. He admits that his bed went a whole year without making, and was mildewed for lack of attention. He says that he would work until exhausted at night, and then fall into bed and know nothing more. Katharina looked well to all these matters, and was a jealous guardian of the health and comfort of her spouse. As for Luther, he felt a bit awkward at first. He had braved the displeasure of the pope and had faced the diet without quaking, but he was not so indifferent as to be utterly insensible as to what his friends said about his marriage. But he gathered courage as time went by. He became thoroughly domestic in his ways. He turned

his attention to a garden. He made a fountain. He had a fish pond. He turned his hand to many practical things. He was no longer a recluse in life or tastes.

And a year after the marriage a baby came to gladden the hearts of Luther and his Katie. The proud father gave it the name of his own father, and the child was christened John.

CHAPTER XVII.

Luther Up to the Diet of Augsburg.

Luther's marriage did not retard the Reformation. At first, of course, it attracted the attention of friend and foe and, as has already been noted, was the occasion for the starting of some vulgar stories which, be it said to their shame, some of Luther's enemies are willing even yet to repeat as true; and yet they are, as they were at the beginning, the vilest slanders. Slander has never been a good argument in answer to what cannot otherwise be answered, but it has been resorted to many a time since the Jews used it against the Saviour, as well as before. As a matter of fact, the step that Luther had taken really advanced the cause so dear to his heart. He had insisted on some of his clerical friends' marriage, and when he took a wife himself he showed to all the world that he had the courage to be consistent. The effect of his marriage on Luther himself is observable in his work even yet. He was less radical and less rash. He realized that whatever involved his own personal safety likewise involved the well-being of wife and family. With him, as with many another brave man, there was willingness to suffer himself, but he shrank from subjecting others to suffering when those others were dearer to him than life itself.

It was perhaps unfortunate, and it may be unfortunate still, that the reformers were not a unit in all that

they believed and taught. But such unity has never existed where there has been an open Bible and freedom of thought. Differences of opinion soon showed themselves among the men who found the better way. The nature and purpose of the several sacraments, as well as their number, soon became matters of divergent views and warm, sometimes bitter, controversy. The Anabaptists, who certainly received their inspiration and impulse from the teachings of Luther, rejected the baptism of infants. The question of the real presence in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper early in the great movement took on the proportions of a vital issue. This was inevitable. The Romish Church has always taken the words of Jesus, "This is my body, . . . this is my blood," in bald literalness. This interpretation carries with it the idea that Jesus meant to say to his disciples that they were partaking of the flesh and blood of the very hands that gave them the bread and wine. It is inconceivable that the partakers of the Last Supper understood the Saviour thus. The doctrine of the change of the bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ was one of the superstitions of the Middle Ages. This superstition in the course of time led to the grossest idolatry. The disciples never worshiped the mere body of Jesus; but Rome has taught her followers to worship the bread and wine that are supposed to be turned into that body.

Luther rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation. But it was only natural that he should fall short of a full comprehension of the truth. He believed and taught that while the elements in the Lord's Supper

were not actually changed into the body and blood of Christ, yet in some mysterious way the body and blood were present in these elements. Others of his contemporaries held a different view.

The Reformation began in Switzerland about the same time it did in Saxony. Its leader was the brave but unfortunate Zwingli. Zwingli was less than a year younger than Luther. Like Luther, he became a priest. Scholarly, devout, and courageous, he rose to prominence in the Church. Zurich is historic by reason of his work and residence there. He studied Greek, made a copy of the New Testament in that language with his own hand, and even memorized the entire contents so as to be able to repeat any part of it at any time. Of course this made him a reformer. Rome sought to bribe him into silence by the offer of promotion. This he refused. He insisted that the Bible should be taught without any human additions. Some of the Swiss cantons adopted his doctrines. Others adhered to the Catholic Church. Civil war broke out. On the 11th of October, 1531, a battle was fought between the Zurich forces and those of the Catholic cantons. Zwingli, at the command of the council of Zurich, led the Protestant army. The latter were largely outnumbered and were defeated, Zwingli himself being slain.

Zwingli taught a thoroughly anti-Romish view of the sacrament. He held that when Jesus said, "This is my body," he meant to say "This represents my body." Many of the followers of Luther accepted this statement. It was practically the contention of Karl-

stadt, and friction came as a result of the discussion. An effort was made to reach a satisfactory solution of the question, but nothing tangible or permanent came of a conference that was held with a view to reaching an agreement. It was a time of intense convictions, intense faith, and unhappily a time of intense prejudices. Zeal such as that which burned in the hearts of the reformers has not always been holy fire. Zeal needs nothing so much as discretion, and yet nothing is oftener lacking when men become thoroughly aroused on vital questions.

The Reformation had now gained a wide support throughout Germany. The Landgrave, Philip of Hesse, followed by the Duke of Brunswick, the authorities of the city of Magdeburg, and other places united with the Elector of Saxony in a sort of alliance for mutual protection in the new evangelical doctrines. A similar alliance had been formed by the Catholic States of Germany. From this time forth Luther's energies were given, not as heretofore to opposing the errors of Romanism, but to correcting the effects of these long-standing errors. He had shown himself a master in the overturning of abuses; he was now to show himself a master in the reconstruction of institutions. An unskilled workman can tear down a building; only an experienced builder can take the materials and build them into a new house. Luther now showed the qualities of an ecclesiastical statesman. His work from this time forth was less scenic, but it was none the less useful.

Things were in confusion. The people were ignorant, and many of them dissolute. Luther knew very

well that there was a material difference between persuading men to give up Romanism and persuading them to become Christians. Whatever he may have thought as to civil and religious liberty, he was too wise to advocate the absolute separation of Church and State at this time. He believed that it was the duty of the civil authorities to look after the spiritual needs of the people. He urged the Elector John to take up the matter. He inaugurated a simple order of service in the Church at Wittenberg. In this the German language was used. This ultimately became the uniform order throughout Protestant Germany. He suggested, and insisted upon the suggestion being carried out, that a general visitation be made by competent men throughout the Churches, and that these visiting commissioners be authorized to correct as far as possible all existing abuses. Some time elapsed before these suggestions were fully carried out. The results of this official investigation quite justified Luther's judgment. At one place the preacher was a sort of fortune teller. At another the pastor was unable to repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. Drunkenness and dissolute living were common among the clergy. This was the spiritual legacy left to the Protestants by the Romish hierarchy. Luther exerted his influence in behalf of schools and popular education. Unquestionably the fact that the German people are the most generally educated people in all the world is due to the influence of the Lutheran movement.

Except the German Bible itself, the richest gift of Martin Luther to his beloved Germans was his cate-

chism. This was so simple, and at the same time so comprehensive, that for generations it has been placed in the hands of the young, and has for more than three hundred years kept the heart of Germany true to the principles of the Reformation and the Bible. This catechism (there were really two of them—a larger and a smaller one) has been placed in the hands of the children of successive generations in the common schools, and familiarity with it has been required of every boy and girl who has been confirmed as a member of the Lutheran Church. It has been more potent in shaping the character and destiny of the German peoples than laws and arms and armies. The first edition of this catechism appeared about 1529.

All this time Luther was happy with his Katie. He often wrote in a discouraged, despondent way about many things, but there was always a note of deep contentment in what he wrote and said about his home life. The year after his marriage, as already mentioned, his little Hans came. The next year, in December, little Elizabeth was added to the family circle. But there were trials in the home, as there are in all homes, though none of those which come from lack of love and harmony between husband and wife. Luther had a serious struggle with sickness. He developed a trouble (the gravel) at this time from which he suffered not a little first and last. One day in July, 1527, he was attacked by a sudden rush of blood to his head, and almost died before relief came. Indeed, he thought he was dying, and summoned his household about him. He comforted his good wife, blessed his little Hans,

who smiled back at his sick father, and pointed to some silver cups which had been given to him and which were about all his earthly possessions, and which he wished his Katie to have. But he rallied and was soon on his feet again. In his days of semi-invalidism he had a disagreeable, distressing return of his old spiritual struggles. Satan used his physical ailments to buffet him withal. As wise as he was, and as fully as he believed in the power and presence of the evil one, he never quite learned the crafty ways and wiles of his old enemy. Much of his depression was of course temperamental. There are intense natures whose joys are ecstasies and whose aches are agonies. Luther's nature was one of this sort. Sadly enough for the reformer, however, there were more sorrows and trials in his life than joys. Luther's lot was hard, but he was faithful in suffering as in labor.

In the autumn of 1527 the plague broke out in Wittenberg. As usual, its appearance created a panic. The university itself was removed temporarily to Jena. Those who could do so fled from the city. The Elector John urged Luther to seek safety elsewhere. He wrote Luther a personal letter, in which he insisted that the reformer's life was too important at this juncture to be imperiled by tarrying in Wittenberg. But Luther did not flee from the danger. He could not well take his family with him, and he would not leave them behind. He would not desert his people in a time like this. He could but die at his post, and to die thus would be martyrdom; and had he not faced martyrdom before? Death was abroad in the city; sorrow was in many

homes, and terror everywhere. The plague entered his own household. A woman that was an inmate of his home was smitten. He was deeply anxious about his wife, whose condition made the danger all the more critical.

But the visitation was not protracted. The pestilence soon subsided. The inmate of his household recovered. His Katie was safely delivered of the daughter that was christened Elizabeth. The clouds lifted from his home and from his city, and he went on with his work. The very troubles through which he had passed served as a wholesome corrective of some of those mental moods and bitter struggles which he had known. Christians need outward troubles. By them they are often saved from those spiritual sorrows which are harder to bear. It is hard to fight unseen foes. It is not strange that some of the most peaceful hours that come to those who know the Lord come in the midst of the severest conflicts.

Luther, who was always practical, turned his attention to farming. He bought some improved seeds and tools, and determined to provide for emergencies and attain financial independence by the cultivation of the soil. He had never sought prominence, and was willing, as he had always been, and was even more willing now that he had a family, to retire to private life. His peasant blood and training stood him in good stead at this time, as it did in many other times in his life. He was delighted to find that he could do these commonplace things, and that if the worst came he could take care of his wife and children on a farm. In the course

of time he bought a little farm on which he raised grain and other things and, better still, found the recreation that he really needed. The morbid life of the cloister dropped off in the open air of the garden and the field.

But there were other perils besides the plague. Rome had not relaxed its opposition. That he had escaped the stake up to this time was not due to any papal clemency. A new pope had come to the throne. Hadrian, like the ancient king of Judah, had died without being desired. Another member of the Medici, though an illegitimate descendant of that aristocratic Italian family, occupied the papal chair. He took the title of Clement VII. As cultured as Leo, more liberal than Hadrian, more virtuous than most of his immediate predecessors, well trained to the ways of the papacy as a member of the curia under Leo and Hadrian, it was thought by friends of the Church that he was peculiarly well fitted for the office of pope at this particular time. But never a more unfortunate pope occupied the reputed seat of St. Peter, and scarcely a more unwise one. The spirit and policies of his predecessors for more than a century came to their disastrous climax during his reign. The papacy has never been the same since he sat for a decade in the Vatican. As one studies his history one naturally thinks of the fabled dog of old Æsop which, growling at his own shadow in the stream he was crossing, dropped the piece of meat he was carrying. Clement loved temporal power. Breaking sacred treaties, employing fictitious agencies, and finally resorting to arms to secure or preserve

this, he lost forever to the papacy the northern and western nations of Europe. One wonders what would have happened had his immediate successor, Paul III., instead of Clement, come to the papal throne. Had Paul reigned a score of years sooner, some of the chapters of the great Reformation might have been written differently, and others might never have been written at all. But the folly of popes and Churches is like the folly of individuals; it always brings the consequences of folly. Papal infallibility cannot reverse this law. The folly of Julius and Leo and Hadrian and Clement was not like dead leaves scattered by the winds of winter; it was the tares that could produce only a harvest of falsehood and disaster. And such harvests must be gathered and garnered, whether the harvester will or not.

A notable diet was held at Speyer in the summer of 1526. Other gatherings of a royal character had been held in the old city by the Rhine; for the emperors had sometimes made their homes there for a season. But no diet ever held there was so important in some of its doings as the one that met there in the summer of 1526. Ferdinand of Austria, brother to Charles V. and a faithful servant of the pope, had seen the emperor and obtained from him unequivocal instructions as to what should be done in the matter of enforcing the imperial edict against Luther, which had been allowed to lie dormant for some time. The circumstances seemed propitious for carrying out this edict. Charles had won a complete victory over Francis, his inveterate enemy, and this unfortunate king of

France had been made his prisoner. The two had agreed upon a treaty that had two objects of united effort in view. One of these was the war against the infidel Turks, the other was the crushing out of the heretics in Germany. These enterprises assuredly commended themselves to the sympathy and interest of the holy father. It was the best and the last opportunity Clement or any of his successors ever had to wield the secular arm so mightily against the Reformation. But Clement lost the opportunity, rather threw it away, and it could never be regained. His folly led to a tragic, if not providential retribution. It led to the capture and pillage of Rome itself by the Protestant army under the banner of Charles.

Clement grew jealous of Charles's power in Italy. The emperor was virtually supreme in the Italian Peninsula. The pope was not sure that his own dominions were safe from his invasion. Clement began negotiations with Francis. He absolved that conquered monarch from the conditions of the unwilling treaty he had made with Charles. Francis promised his support in the war Clement proposed to make on Charles. Henry VIII. of England, who was anxious to obtain the papal consent to his divorce from Catharine of Aragon, the aunt of Charles, pledged substantial assistance. The two kings and the pope entered into a "holy alliance" against Charles. Open war followed. In the early part of 1527 the imperial army entered Rome. Among the conquering soldiers were many Protestants from Germany. They had willingly served under the imperial banner in the campaign against the

pope. The old count who had spoken so encouragingly to Luther when the latter was called before the Diet of Worms led the German division of the conquering army across the Alps, and would have been at its head when Rome was entered but for a sudden breaking down of his health after entering Italy. The ancient city, so often conquering and so often conquered, was given over to the pillage of the soldiers. Many treasures of art were carried away, gold and silver were appropriated unceremoniously, and the hungry, needy soldiery helped themselves without stint to the good things in the Vatican and in the palaces of the rich. But not many acts of violence were committed by the troops, and the pope escaped with nothing more serious than complete discomfiture.

Clement gladly concluded a peace with Charles, and was shrewd enough to snatch from defeat some of the fruits of victory. He gained temporal power in Italy but lost it elsewhere. And the shock he gave to Charles must have awakened strange thoughts in the mind of the emperor. Whatever may have been the cause, whether this war with the papacy or other reasons of a political nature, it is certain that Charles's attitude toward the Lutherans was more conciliatory after this than it had ever been before.

Of course all this history was not written before the diet met at Speyer, but its initial stages had been reached. The original instructions from Charles were withheld by Ferdinand, and in the absence of the emperor and free from any pressure from him, the diet took no action against Luther and his fellow-reformers.

In fact, some of the most influential members of the royal body were evangelical, and in open and avowed sympathy with the truths for which the movement came into being. Luther's books were sold publicly on the streets, and the sacrament in both kinds was administered in the churches.

The body adjourned in August. Its final action left spiritual matters to be disposed of by the several States as each might find it expedient. This was really all that the Evangelicals had ever contended for. Civil freedom and not political force has always been the human reliance of Protestantism. If now and then, here and there, it has departed from this standard, such departure has come about through a failure to throw off utterly the Catholic doctrine of union between Church and State.

The outcome of this diet at Speyer was the first victory of Protestantism in its battle for freedom of conscience. The shackles thus broken could never be replaced upon its hands and feet again.

Left thus to give his attention to shaping and giving proper direction to the new movement and bringing into proper action the dynamic forces which it had set free, Luther went on with his real work as the reformer. What has been stated already may be repeated with emphasis: He had no thought or intention of founding a new Church at the beginning. Whatever intention or effort he may have put forth afterwards, particularly at this stage of his history, grew out of the very emergencies that had arisen. It was not enough to tear down the old sheepfold, which

was unsafe for the flock. A new fold must be built. Out of his effort, but with no intention of perpetuating his name by it, gradually took form the Lutheran Church of Germany and of many other nations.

But the establishment of the Lutheran Church did not come at this time. Many a day of persecution and struggle passed before this was accomplished. The great oak that lives for centuries gathers strength from the winds that beat upon its boughs. The very stability of the Church has come to it from its persecutions. Its enemies have often been its best friends.

The days of controversy were not yet over, nor the days of danger. The pope and the emperor were a constant menace, and so were the Catholic German States. Ever and anon there were ominous thunder mutterings from Madrid and from Rome. But a common danger did not unite the reformers. Zwingli and Luther contended sharply about the question of the real presence. The difference between them was more metaphysical than material. Luther believed that it was not the physical but the spiritual body of Jesus that was present in the elements of the Lord's Supper, and virtually that only believers were benefited by this presence, and that, too, in only a spiritual way. Zwingli contended that the bread and wine were only emblems of the body and blood, and that the partaking of them was simply a means of grace to the believer, and not necessarily more beneficial than other means of grace. Since these reformers were practically agreed as to the benefits and beneficiaries of this ordinance, one is tempted to wonder why they contended so hotly

as to the *modus operandi* of the sacrament. But each of these honest men saw a vital question involved in the controversy, and really more than one vital question. But they did not always see each other's sincerity. Luther thought Zwingli was a fanatic, and Zwingli had a similar opinion of Luther.

As we shall see later, this controversy came to a focus in a personal meeting and discussion between Luther and Zwingli. But the issue was never really settled, and remains a matter of difference between two of the great branches of the Reformed Church until this very day.

Luther had other controversies. He wrote a second letter to Duke George, much more conciliatory than his previous communications to that nobleman, and one of similar purport to Herry VIII., of England. The answers that he received to these olive branch efforts were coarse and vindictive. Luther answered Henry in a manly way. If he was a sinner, as Henry charged, he was such only in the sight of God. As to virtue, the king was not worthy to unloose his shoes. He was a fool for trusting men, even kings, too readily. His controversy with George was cut short by a command from the Elector John.

As decided as Luther was, and as ready to enter into controversy, in which he never minced words, he had no intolerant spirit of persecution. Very severe measures of repression were taken against the Anabaptists by the authorities, some of them being put to death. Luther disapproved and condemned all this. He insisted that a man should be allowed to think as he

chose, that faith was essentially free. In this matter Luther was not only in advance of his age generally; he was in advance of his contemporary reformers. He knew the heart of a hunted, persecuted man, and he was too true to the lessons of his own experience to persecute others. He was equally decided in his views as to the taking up of arms in defense of the gospel. A meeting of the diet was held at Speyer in the spring of 1529. At this meeting the body went as far as it could in reversing the tolerant action of three years before. It was evident that the Catholic States of Germany were acting in concert, and that a tacit, if not a specific, agreement had been reached by them to cooperate with each other and with the emperor in crushing out the Reformation. The minority members of the body, headed by the impetuous Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, entered a protest against the action taken by the majority. This protest gave name to the followers of Luther and other reformers, and through the centuries since then they have been known as Protestants.

The protesting princes now entered into a league for mutual protection, and were ready to take up arms in defense of the principles they regarded as essential to the true faith. It was now that Luther spoke his convictions as to going to war for the protection of the gospel and its followers. He insisted that Christians should have more faith in God. He reminded his friends that Jesus said that "they that take the sword should perish with the sword." And he brought forward the same views that he had advanced some years

before this as to the relations between the individual citizen and the State in the matter of faith. The faith of the citizen was not subject to the dictation of the State, but in case the State undertook to enforce belief upon its citizens or subjects the latter were not justified by Scripture in resisting force with force. The authority of Charles, he contended, was supreme in Germany, and while the emperor could be deposed by a unanimous vote of the diet, his authority could not be set aside by any particular State or combination of States as long as he was emperor.

In this connection another fact illustrating Luther's patriotism should be mentioned. The aggressions of the Turks in Southeastern and Central Europe were a real menace to Western civilization and to the life of the nations that were at least nominally Christians. Wherever these conquering semisavages from Asia had carried the conquering crescent, the extirpation of Christianity had followed, at least to the extent that fire and sword could accomplish this dire result. The Turks had overrun Hungary, and about this time laid siege to Vienna. The popes had repeatedly sounded the note of alarm throughout Western Europe, and had asked and received money for the purpose of resisting these invaders. Unfortunately, however, it was known that money raised for this object had been applied to other and less commendable enterprises, and naturally many had grown indifferent by reason of this repeated cry of wolf. Luther made a strong and patriotic appeal to his fellow-countrymen to aid in carrying forward this war of defense. He said that it was

not another crusade, but a fight for the very existence of the Church.

The action of the diet in the spring of 1529 has already been noted. In view of this action and the fact that Charles and the pope were once more on friendly terms, together with the expected coming of Charles to Germany the next year to attend the next meeting of the diet in person, it was very desirable that the reformers of every shade of opinion should be brought into harmonious coöperation. It was especially the wish of the friends of the movement that the Swiss Evangelicals and those of Germany should be brought together. Besides the moral effect such a union would have, there were supposed political reasons why this harmony was important. The Swiss have been great soldiers. For many centuries they have been the military free lances of Europe. Kings and popes have been glad to have them as their special and trusted bodyguard. With a large Swiss contingent rallying round the Protestant cause, Charles would be more willing to deal in a conciliatory way with the reformers. The line of separation between the Protestants of Zurich and of Wittenberg was the difference between the two factions as to the Lord's Supper. To the mind of the layman this division seemed so insignificant as to have little weight against the larger benefits of Protestant union at this time of common danger. Philip, who was now the recognized leader among the Protestant princes, determined if possible to bring about a meeting between Luther and Zwingli and a reconciliation between them.

He succeeded in bringing the warring theologians face to face. Luther was reluctant about entering into the arrangement, but Zwingli was more than willing. It is said that he slipped away from Zurich at night so as to avoid detention by the authorities, who were unwilling for him to go. Perhaps Luther regarded the enterprise as useless; perhaps Zwingli expected more from the conference than was possible. The time and place of meeting were well chosen. It was the early autumn, a season when men are best prepared, it seems, for calm deliberation. The place was the beautifully situated town of Marburg, on the River Lahn. The theologians were entertained in the old castle by Philip. This venerable building stands on a hill overlooking a lovely valley, with the river flowing at its foot, wooded hills not far away, and mountains in the distance. The hall where the contestants met had been the gathering place for knights in other days, and Philip himself acted as chairman. The fare was sumptuous, and everything inside and outside the old castle was calculated to inspire peace and good fellowship.

Luther was accompanied and assisted in the debate by Melanchthon, as well as one or two others, while Zwingli had as his fellow-disputant the learned Œcolampadius. The debates lasted parts of two or three days. The debaters gathered round a table. On this Luther had written with a piece of chalk on the velvet cover: *"Hoc meum corpus est."* These words of the Saviour were his sole argument and reliance throughout the discussion. He refused to listen to anything that lessened the literal meaning of

these words of the Saviour. Zwingli's argument ranged around the words of the Saviour in the sixth chapter of John: "The flesh profiteth nothing." The discussion was sharp, but the spirit of the contestants was in the main brotherly and courteous. Luther was dogmatic; Zwingli was argumentative. The former was choleric and excitable; the latter was cooler and more judicious. Luther was not convinced, and Zwingli was not willing to yield one jot or tittle. The discussion was about to terminate in a fruitless and utterly disappointing way. It might have continued longer, but the dread "sweating sickness," one of the worst of the plagues of the Middle Ages, resulting, like the rest, from the ignorance and unsanitary conditions of those dark days, had broken out in the town. It was a terror from which kings and nobles fled in dismay, for it often invaded palaces and castles, and its ravages were more fearful than the cholera or the yellow fever. Philip would not consent that the conference should prove absolutely abortive. He urged the contending parties to leave unsettled the question about which they differed and seek for a basis of agreement. When men argue, they usually get farther apart; when they reason, they generally get closer together. In the one case differences are magnified; in the other points of agreement are sought out and brought forward. Much feeling was manifested in the last stage of the debate. These good men were at last coming to a better understanding of each other and of the spirit of true brotherhood. Zwingli burst into tears. Luther was moved. All parties shook hands. "We will

meet in the spirit of charity," said Luther. "After a while we shall be brethren."

It was agreed that a statement should be drawn up setting forth the points on which the two factions were united. All parties looked to Luther to prepare this paper. He retired to his closet, and we cannot doubt but that he gave earnest prayer as well as earnest thought to the matter in hand. He hardly hoped to prepare a paper that all would agree to. His success, however, surpassed his hopes. He presented after some time a series of fifteen articles which contained the essentials of Protestantism. These related to the fundamental doctrines of the divine unity and trinity, the incarnation and the sufferings of Christ, his death and resurrection, and besides these, stated clearly the doctrine of justification by faith alone and the work of the Holy Spirit. The statement condemned the mass and announced the real presence in the Lord's Supper, but left the question as to the nature of his presence without distinct statement—in other words, whether this presence was bodily or spiritual.

All parties signed this agreement, and the result of this historic conference at Marburg was one of the first evidences sent forth to the world of the substantial unity among Protestants. It is the only unity that is possible between Christians—a unity in essentials, and freedom in nonessentials.

This Marburg gathering did not stay fully the controversy touching the issues involved in the discussion, but the tone of the discussion ever afterwards was more conservative and conciliatory. The leaders of

the Reformation had come to know each other better, and this was no small gain to them and to the movement that was working a world-wide revolution.

This conference was held on the last of September and the first days of October, 1529, and the agreement is known in history as the "Marburg Articles."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Luther at Coburg, the Diet of Augsburg, and Other Events in His History.

The year 1530 was memorable in the history of the great Reformation. One of the events of this year marked an epoch in the great movement. This was the formulation of the Augsburg Confession of Faith, which, together with the articles agreed upon by Luther and Zwingli, of which mention was made in the last chapter, constituted the basis of most of the subsequent creeds of Protestantism.

Up to this time the Protestants had confined themselves mainly to negatives and denials. These may suffice for a bond of union during a season of struggle against error and oppression, but a chain of negations cannot hold men together for any great length of time. The tie must be strengthened by positive and unequivocal affirmations.

The situation of Luther and his followers was serious, if not full of peril to themselves and their cause. The pope and the emperor had patched up a peace. There was a lull in the hostilities between Francis and Charles. Clement was urgent in his wishes and demands with reference to the suppression of the Lutheran heresy, though prudent enough to counsel mild measures at first. His legate, Campeggio, had instructions that were bloody enough, however, had Charles listened to them. The diet was to meet at

Augsburg in April. The emperor was scheduled to arrive early and preside in person. Luther's associates were full of apprehension. Luther himself felt less alarm. The cause of the Reformation could not now be disposed of by a few burnings and banishings. Princes were ready to take up arms in its behalf. Violent measures against it would bring on civil war, and no king or government willingly brings on that. Luther reasoned thus, and the sequel showed the correctness of his judgment. Luther of course did not and could not know all the facts. Charles was loyal to Romanism, but he believed there were abuses which should be corrected. He thought that the best way to brings this about was to summon a general council. This had been Luther's urgent request at the beginning. But popes are not fond of general councils. These bodies had not always been favorable to the usurpations of the popes. Clement had good reason to look with disfavor upon such a gathering. A general council might raise some embarrassing questions as to the right of a man born out of wedlock to be pope. Clement temporized. He suggested to Charles that a call for a general council should be made at the instance of the European monarchs in concert. Later he persuaded Francis to object, and used the objection against both Charles and the council.

The Protestant princes were not unacquainted with the danger which imperiled them and the cause they had espoused. At one time active preparations were made for armed resistance in case this became necessary. Luther, however, set his face steadfastly against

all this. He did not believe in such a means of defense. He believed that Christians should stand faithfully by their convictions, even to the point of martyrdom. There had been no time in many years now when he would not have gone to the stake rather than surrender his conscience. But he did not think that men should do wrong even in behalf of the truth; and resistance to civil authority he regarded as wrong. It should be said to his credit that had he counseled forcible resistance to Rome and to Charles, Germany would have been the scene of battle and bloodshed long before it was. He had no respect for the usurpations of the papacy, but so long as the emperor sustained and supported the authority of Rome the question was not what Rome claimed but what Charles commanded. This loyalty to duly constituted authority was one of the ever controlling convictions of his whole life.

Either because of intimations from Charles or because the Protestant members of the diet knew that the matter would reach an acute stage at the approaching session, it was generally understood that a specific statement of the Protestant contentions should be brought forward at Augsburg. Of course no one was so well qualified to prepare this statement as Martin Luther. But Martin Luther was still under civil and ecclesiastical ban, and of course could not appear before the emporer and the diet. It would not even be safe for him to appear at Augsburg. His counsel seemed indispensable, however, and the Elector John determined to have him as near the seat of the diet as

would be at all safe, so that he might be reached and counseled with in the emergency that all realized was approaching. Luther therefore accompanied the elector as far as the little city of Coburg. This is a thrifty, picturesquely located town in Central Germany, standing on the left bank of the Itz, a tributary of the River Regen. Some old buildings, a ducal palace, a general air of cleanliness and industry, and historic associations running back many centuries give the city, which has even yet less than 20,000 population, an abiding interest to travelers. But the chief attraction to visitors about the place is the old castle, where, during the sitting of the diet at Augsburg, Martin Luther remained in semiconcealment. Luther called this an abode among the birds, and its situation warranted this poetic designation.

This old castle stands on a hill five hundred feet above the little city nestling at its base. In recent times the old building has been used partly as a prison, but the room where Luther slept and the bed, also several apartments that he used, are shown to travelers.

Luther came to this interesting old castle the latter part of April, and spent most of the remainder of the year here. He was not in semicaptivity, as at Wartburg ten years before. His wants were well provided for. There was much work to be done, and while he chafed under the seeming necessity of staying away from the diet and his associates in the Reformation at this time of crucial importance, and was pained by his separation from his family, yet upon the whole he seems to have been unusually cheerful and hopeful.

He was in constant communication with his friends, and his letters give delightful glimpses of the personal life and tastes of this always interesting man and leader. The crows and ravens woke him every morning, and he wrote to his friends that these noisy early risers were holding diets and general councils. They were like chattering bishops and princes and dignitaries of Church and State. Surely no father ever wrote a sweeter letter to a child than this, which Luther wrote to little Hans from his castle home:

Grace and peace in Christ, my dear little son. I am pleased to see that thou learnest thy lessons well and prayest diligently. Do thus, my little son, and persevere. When I come home, I will bring thee a fine "fairing." I know of a pretty garden where merry children that wear little golden coats run about, and gather up nice apples and pears and cherries and plums under the trees, and sing and dance and ride on pretty horses with gold bridles and silver saddles. I asked the man of the place whose the garden was and whose the children were. He said: "These are the children who pray and learn and are good." Then I answered: "Dear sir, I also have a son called Hans Luther. May he not also come into this garden and eat these nice pears and apples and ride a little horse and play with these children?" The man said: "If he says his prayers and learns and is good, he too may come into the garden; and Lippus and Jost may come, and when they all come back they shall have pipes and drums and lutes and all sorts of stringed instruments, and they shall dance and shoot with little crossbows." Then he showed me a smooth lawn in the garden laid out for dancing, where hung pipes of pure gold and drums and beautiful crossbows. But it was still early, and the children had not dined. So I could not wait for the dance, and said to the man: "Dear Sir, I will go straight home and write all this to my dear little son Hans, that he may pray diligently and learn well and be good, and so come into this garden; but he

has an Aunt Lene whom he must bring with him." And the man answered: "So shall it be; go home and write as you say." Therefore, dear little son Hans, learn and pray with good heart, and tell Lippus and Jost to do the same, and then you will all come to the beautiful garden together. Almighty God guard you. Give my love to Aunt Lene, and give her a kiss for me. In the year 1530.

Your loving father, MARTIN LUTHER.

The "Aunt Lene" mentioned in this letter was an inmate of Luther's household, to whom the father as well as the son was much attached. Lippus was a son of Melanchthon, and Jost, an abbreviation of Jodocus, was a son of Justus Jonas. It would seem from these tender references to these children that the friendship of the fathers was being perpetuated in the sons.

This letter was written in June, when the mind of Luther was deeply absorbed with the gravest questions, and when the Reformation itself was passing through one of the greatest crises in its history. This fact shows how strong Luther's parental and domestic attachments were, and discloses a side of his nature that is always attractive.

Luther called his castle abode ("in the empire of the birds," as he expressed it) his Mount Sinai. But he said that he would make a Mount Zion out of it and build three tabernacles—"one for the Psalms, one for the prophets, and one for the fables of Æsop." This was a playful reference to the work he was doing. He had not yet completed his translation of the Old Testament, and he gave his strength and time with unreserved diligence to this great task, urged on by an abiding conviction not only of the uncertainty of his own life

but also as to the early end of the world. In one of his letters he complained that he was forced by ill health to take much of the summer as a holiday; but the work that he did shows little time spent in idleness. He made good progress in his translation of the prophets and, doubtless as a sort of recreation, turned some of Æsop's fables into simple German, with many useful proverbs as morals. He admired these fables greatly, and said he wished his people to get the benefit of them. He was ever on the alert for opportunities to help his "dear Germans." He was always and in everything unselfishly patriotic.

There were some thirty inmates in the castle, and these showed Luther all needed consideration. But his constant and cherished companions were his nephew, Ciriac Kaufmann, and his amanuensis, Veit Dietrich. The latter, who was from Nuremberg, ultimately became a most useful Protestant preacher in his native town. As already stated, Luther worked diligently on his several undertakings, kept in constant touch with his friends at Augsburg, wrote regularly to his Katie, and declared that the castle was the very place for study. He worked so steadily that in May he had a return of his old head trouble, a singing in his ears, and a tendency to faint. He was not sure whether all this was the result of his good fare at the table of his hosts or the work of the devil. Dietrich thought that this last was the real cause, as he said Luther was unusually careful in his diet. He declares that one night he and Luther saw a fiery apparition that looked like

a serpent, and that afterwards Luther fainted and was very sick the next day, too sick to work.

Luther had a real sorrow in the early summer. On May 29 his venerable father passed away. Luther heard of his death eight days later. The father died in the full assurance of faith in the gospel as preached by his son. When the son had read the letter that brought the news of his father's death, he said sorrowfully to Dietrich: "And he too is gone." Then, taking his Psalter, he retired into his private apartment, there to be alone for a season with his sorrow and his God.

In the preceding February he had learned through a letter from his brother that his father was seriously ill, and at that time wrote him a letter that breathed the warmest affection. "It would be a great joy to me," he wrote, "if only you and my mother could come to us here. My Kate and all pray for it with tears. I should hope we would do our best to make you comfortable." And then he assures him of his prayers in his behalf that the Divine Father might strengthen and enlighten this father whom he had given him on earth. He leaves the matter entirely in the hands of God as to whether they shall meet again on earth or in heaven. "For," he wrote, "we doubt not but that we shall shortly see each other again in the presence of Christ, since the departure from this life is a far smaller matter with God than if I were to come hither from you at Mansfeld or you were to go to Mansfeld from me at Wittenberg." Thus in his inmost soul Luther realized the comfort of a faith

in a future state which knew no doubts and asked no questions.

In a letter to Melanchthon, written the day that the intelligence of the good old man's death reached him, he said that all he was and all he had he owed, through divine grace, to his father.

Meantime the diet was slowly gathering in Augsburg. The Protestant princes were accompanied by preachers, and these preachers spoke unequivocally and unhesitatingly in behalf of the gospel. Michelet is much perplexed by the fact that at a time when Germany was threatened by the Turks under the brave Solyman on the one hand, and the perils of civil war brought on by contending religious factions on the other hand, these princes and theologians should be concerned about such matters as transubstantiation and free will, and ascribes it all to the "intrepid phlegm" of the German race. But these same Germans were men of uncompromising conscience, and the matters that were up for settlement were more vital than this French author seems to think. They were much given to prayer. They rested their cause and their defense upon the Word of God, and their courageous contention for the truth ultimately brought freedom to themselves and to all their descendants who have accepted the inheritance.

Charles was slow in coming to Germany. Reaching Innsbruck, he tarried for some time. Here Duke George and other Catholic zealots met him and informed him of what was going on at Augsburg. They were specially bitter against the Lutheran

preachers, and insisted that Charles should command these pestilent fellows to cease from their preaching. It may be said, without adverting to the matter later, that when Charles reached Augsburg he yielded to the wishes of these counselors and compromised with the Protestants by forbidding the Catholic priests to preach anything except sermons that were neither Catholic nor Protestant. These emasculated sermons were so farcical that the people received them with ridicule.

At last, on the 15th of June, two months after the appointed day, Charles entered Augsburg in great state. Protestant and Catholic princes did him honor. There was at least ceremonial cordiality in his welcome. The first discordant note was sounded by a high Catholic functionary who preached the opening sermon of the diet. In this he denounced "the German heretics" as being worse than the Turks. This violent outburst pleased no one except the most radical Romanists.

As already stated, it was the general understanding that a Protestant confession of faith would be presented to the diet. In convoking the body the imperial decree had announced that one of its purposes was to find out "how best to deal with the differences and divisions in the holy faith and the Christian religion." It was declared that "every man's thoughts and opinions should be heard in love and charity and be carefully weighed, and that men should thus be brought in common to Christian truth and thus be reconciled."

All this sounded fair enough, and the Protestants hoped that it might mean all that seemed to be implied. Luther, always ready to honor Charles, was quite disposed to accept this proclamation as an omen of peace and an assurance that the Protestants would be shown toleration. The attitude of Charles became altogether apparent before the diet had finished its work. The reconcilation spoken of simply meant that the Protestants should submit to Rome and the emperor in the matter of faith.

The Protestants proceeded to prepare their statement of doctrines. The year before, at the Elector John's request, Luther had prepared a statement based on the Marburg agreement, but putting more stress on the doctrine of the Eucharist as Luther understood that sacrament. These articles, some seventeen in number, were submitted to the Protestant princes at Schmalkalden, and were generally indorsed by them. These same articles, revised and modified, were presented to the diet at Augsburg, and constitute the nucleus of all Protestant creeds from that day till this.

The task of giving these articles their final cast devolved upon Melanchthon. This associate of Luther was timid and peace-loving. He was prepared to make every possible concession to the Catholics. He sought earnestly to effect a compromise. He went so far as to assure the Romanists that there were really very few differences between them and the Protestants. He sought the favor of the papal legate, and fawned and cringed before the dignitary. He seems to have had little hope of peace in separation

from Rome, so he undertook the forlorn hope of bringing papists and Protestants together. Luther warned him of the utter impossibility of all this. "The pope will not consent, and Luther refuses." This statement for the emperor and the diet was submitted to Luther, and approved by him. It was milder, he said, than he would have made it, but possibly this was better.

When the statement was ready, Charles was unwilling for it to be published. He wished to consider it privately. This proposition, of course, came at the instance of his Catholic advisers. After the reading of the confession before the diet, one of the high dignitaries of the Church asked the redoubtable Dr. Eck if the Catholic doctrine could not be upheld by the Scripture. "No," admitted this old opponent of Luther; "but by the Fathers." Since the Protestants relied on the Scriptures to prove their faith, it is easy to see why the Romanists were not willing that they should come before the diet with their statement. But the Protestant princes knew quite well what this private handling of the matter by the emperor would mean, and declined to have it disposed of in this summary way. Charles, who never liked German, asked that the statement be read in Latin. This meant that only a few of the princes would have understood it, so the Protestant members of the diet insisted that it should be read in German. Charles reluctantly consented to this, and a copy in Latin and one in German were placed in his hands.

The Protestant statement was read to the diet on June 25. Bayer, the chancellor of the Elector John,

read it. Its reading occupied two hours, and those were historic hours in the annals of Protestantism. Nine years before this Martin Luther had stood alone before this great body of German princes and Church dignitaries, and had gone forth with the imperial ban upon him for daring to call in question the authority of the pope over the consciences of men. Now these principles for which Martin Luther had stood bravely and alone were espoused by some of the strongest men and most powerful princes in the diet; and while Rome was as ready as she had ever been—possibly readier than before—to condemn these contentions, she found her power gone, and she was forced to listen to what she would have gladly committed to the flames, and to show consideration to men she would willingly have bound to the stake. And Luther, though absent, shared in the joy of this memorable occasion.

Charles was but little impressed by the statement. It is even recorded that he fell asleep during the reading. But others were impressed, and some of the most influential members of the body, who had not embraced the principles of Luther up to this time, afterwards became openly Protestant. The confession was afterwards published in all Western Europe. And like a blast of wind in March, it helped to fan into a flame the kindling fires of the Reformation wherever it was published.

Weeks of anxious negotiations followed the reading of the confession. Charles instructed the Catholic theologians to prepare an answer to it. This, when

it was brought in, proved to be nothing more than a repetition of Romish assumptions and pretensions. Charles sought to exercise arbitrary power in the case, and commanded the diet to accept as final this Catholic statement and defense. The fiery Prince of Hesse immediately withdrew from the assembly. Other efforts at a compromise failed, as was inevitable. As peace-loving as was Melanchthon, he would not concede the vital tenets of his and his associates' faith. A committee, of which he was a member, failed utterly to effect a settlement of the matters in dispute. No settlement was possible that did not involve a full surrender of all the Protestant contentions, and this, of course, was impossible. Charles found the Catholic princes loyal enough to Rome, but not prepared or willing to take up arms against their Protestant neighbors. The emperor therefore must recede entirely from his position, concede something to his Protestant subjects, or force them into submission by a war for which he was not prepared. He met the situation by the only course that was really open to him under these embarrassing circumstances. He adjourned the diet and allowed the *status quo* to remain. He issued an edict giving the Protestants a year in which to accept the Catholic statement. In the meantime he promised to use his influence to secure the calling of a general council to adjust all questions in dispute.

This result was no surprise to Luther. True, feeling a loyalty to Charles that was more sincere than that of those who simply wished to use the imperial power

to bolster the cause of Rome, he had expected better treatment at the hands of the emperor when Charles called the diet; but it was not long before he discovered that Charles was completely under the dominance of Rome. He had kept in constant touch with the deliberations at Augsburg, and had reënforced the wavering courage of Melanchthon with letters that breathed the spirit of devotion to the great cause. But he did not depend upon human means to accomplish the victory of the cause and the safety of his friends. He had constant recourse to prayer. He said he would pray until he knew that his prayers were heard in heaven. He gave three hours a day to prayer, and urged his friends to do the same. Those who believe in the worth of prayer at all cannot doubt the efficacy of these mighty intercessions in behalf of the Reformation by this man of God. In aftertimes he spoke of this period in his own history and the history of the Reformation, and expressed a firm conviction that the deliverance wrought at Augsburg was an answer to prayer.

How real Luther's faith was and how intimately he knew God as his Father this little incident discloses. One day Dietrich heard him praying aloud, and this was a part of his prayer: "I know that thou art our Father and our God. . . . The danger is thine as well as ours; the whole cause is thine; we have put our hands to it because we were obliged to. Do thou protect it." He wrote home to his wife: "Pray thou with confidence, for all is well arranged and God will protect us."

Luther returned to Wittenberg early in October. On his way from Augsburg the Elector John had brought him a ring with the Protestant coat of arms. This, which Luther had adopted as his own in lieu of the family coat of arms already mentioned, was a rose with a heart in it, and in the heart a cross. This symbol speaks its own lessons. It tells of the moral beauty, sincerity, and self-sacrifice of the men who stood for what was destined to bless all the world through all the succeeding centuries to the coming of the Lord of the Church and of the world.

No one went away from the Diet of Augsburg with a sadder heart than the emperor himself. In bidding farewell to his kinsman, the Elector John, he said sadly: "O, uncle, uncle! I expected better things of you!" The elector made no reply except the tears that came to his eyes.

CHAPTER XIX.

Luther and the Further Progress of the Reformation.

Martin Luther was now forty-seven years old, and he was the best-known man in all Europe. Princes, the pope, and even the emperor himself did not possess such fame. This peasant had become the friend and adviser of kings, the counselor of princes, and the untitled bishop of the Protestant Church. He never sought official preferment for himself, and to the day of his death he remained simply a professor at Wittenberg and the pastor of the people there.

The great Reformation was constantly widening in its sweep. It was no longer a religious movement. It was now a great political movement as well. This was inevitable. The methods of Rome's propaganda made it so. Except when forced to do so, Rome has never sought to save men by making converts of single individuals. She has preferred what she has regarded as the more effective way of bringing whole nations into the Church. To do this she has first secured the adhesion of temporal rulers, and through them brought the power of the State to bear upon individuals. With the prestige of centuries of power, her pretensions, which were only ostensibly spiritual, have been boundless. She has gone, invited or uninvited, into the palaces of kings. She has seated herself by the side of judges on the bench. She has ven-

tured into the chambers of assemblies. She has found her way into the headquarters of generals. She has sat as one bidden at the tables of the nobleman and the rich. She has marched with soldiers under every banner of every nation of Western Europe. She has sat supreme in the sanctuary. Through the confessional she has entered the inner lives of men and women. She has stood by the dying, and dared to dictate the fate of the dead. And everywhere she has gone she has had but one object in view—the extension and maintenance of the power of the papacy. Her very methods were at last the means of her undoing in many nations in Europe and the gradual downfall of a power that was never righteously her own. Seeking to dominate the State, the State finally resisted her aggressions, and this resistance gave added strength to the great Reformation. The first political effect of the Reformation was to change the order of things existing before the times of Martin Luther. Formerly the Church had dominated the State; afterwards the State dominated the Church. This came about by a sort of reversionary right, and it was inevitable, if not best. Possibly anything was better than the possession of political and spiritual power by an ecclesiastic seated in Rome who claimed everything in heaven and earth as *ex officio* his own.

To write the history of the Reformation from this time forward, during the life of Martin Luther, would be to write the political and ecclesiastical history of Germany, as well as much of the history of the neighboring nations. Luther was not less a part of the

great movement, except as the movement had become greater. He was no longer a vidette and a picket; a great army had advanced to his support.

In tracing the life of Luther from this time it is not necessary to go into details as has been done up to this time in this study. A rapid survey of the leading facts will suffice.

The adjournment of the Diet of Augsburg, as has already been noted, left the *status quo* remaining. But this state of things could not continue indefinitely. Charles had allowed the Protestants a year in which to recant and accept the counter statement issued by the Catholic theologians at Augsburg. This imperial edict might mean war if resisted, and would no doubt mean war if Charles could once be free to carry out the wishes of the pope and at the same time vindicate his power. To meet this emergency the Protestant princes resolved on preparations for armed resistance. Luther no longer opposed this course. He came to recognize the principle that when rulers exercise unwarranted power their subjects can lawfully resist them. In the early part of 1531 the Protestant princes met at the little town of Schmalkalden and organized the famous "Schmalkalden Alliance." Nine Protestant States and eleven free cities entered into this alliance. The agreement involved mutual protection in the enjoyment of religious freedom, and loyalty to the principles of the Reformation. Later, five other States and ten more cities entered the alliance. The League, for such it was called, was to last nine years. Afterwards it was renewed, and for many years it was a

powerful factor in the preservation of Protestantism in Germany. France and England courted its favor, and offered it coöperation because it curtailed the power of Charles. This historic Schmalkalden League was finally consummated on February 27, 1531.

The diet met the next year at Nuremberg. The Protestant faction had grown so strong that the Catholic princes and Charles himself were forced to recognize and reckon with them. A peace was concluded which lasted for many years. This was little more than a *modus vivendi.* All that the Protestants wished was not granted, but liberty of conscience and of worship was granted them. In fact, the *status quo* was virtually continued. This agreement has been called a peace. As a matter of fact, however, it was little more than a truce between two parties who could not be at permanent peace. Many times during the succeeding years there were rumors of a disturbing sort, and more than once the storm that had threatened for so long to break over Germany seemed ready to burst. But throughout the rest of Luther's life there was at least outward peace. He was hardly in his grave, however, before the long threatened war broke out between the imperial forces and the Schmalkalden League.

But there were troubles enough. It was only in accordance with human nature that in a time like this men should not merely break away from the old landmarks of belief, but that they should go far beyond the bounds of reason. This tendency has already been noted in connection with the war of the peasants. It

was to find another illustration about this time in the outbreak of the Anabaptists at Münster. The fanatical leaders of the movement contended for many of the things for which the peasants had fought ten years before this. Their motto was, "Repent!" but their practice seemed to indicate that they believed more in rapine. They carried things with a high hand at Münster. They drove out the town council because that body was not willing to put all their demands into force. They pillaged Catholic churches and establishments. They said that there were two enemies of Jesus in the world—Luther and the pope—and that Luther was the worse of the two. They became so violent that at last Protestants and Romanists were constrained to unite in suppressing them.

This bloody episode of the great Reformation was a matter of deep regret to Luther. Some of the leaders in the movement had been followers of Luther, and of course his opponents were all too ready to charge him with responsibility for all this fanaticism.

Another matter terminated more peaceably and satisfactorily. The Protestants of the South German States were disposed to accept the views of the Eucharist held by Zwingli, but they were exceedingly anxious to reach an agreement with Luther. In this effort one of the most interesting men of this period was leader. This was Martin Bucer. Bucer was eight years younger than Luther, and was a native of a town in Alsace. At fourteen he became a member of the Dominican order. Afterwards, at the suggestion of his superior, he went to Heidelberg to study

theology. His real name was "Cowhorn," but this did not suit his scholarly tastes, and he called himself by a name which is derived from two Greek words, the combination being supposed to represent the German original. At Leipsic he heard the discussion between Luther and Eck, and was so impressed with Luther's views that he became a Protestant. He became a leader of the theological school of his part of Germany, and was among the number who attended the diet at Augsburg in 1530. But he declined to subscribe to the confession of faith drawn up there, and afterwards drew up what was called the "Tetrapolitan Confession." He was much inclined to a pacification with Luther, and in company with some of his fellow-theologians he waited on Luther in Wittenberg. After much and anxious consultation a statement was drawn up which, while it did not fully accord with the views of either party, was nevertheless subscribed to by both amid much joy. Bucer continued the steadfast friend of Luther and the Reformation. In 1549 matters in Germany not going quite to his notion, he accepted an invitation from Archbishop Cranmer to come to England and enter Cambridge University as a professor. He continued here only a few years, when death overtook him. He received honorable burial in the land of his adoption, where he had won many friends. Later, when Bloody Mary came to the throne of England, at her instance, inspired, of course, by her Catholic counselors, she had the bones of the old German reformer and professor dug up and burned in the market place.

Union of Church and State has never been best for Church or State. A low moral standard and policies of government that were not for the highest interests of the citizen have generally resulted from this union. When profligate kings are the head of the Church, and set the pace in morals for a whole nation, as has too often happened, it would be a marvel if the people themselves were not corrupt. The union of Church and State, which was one of the heirlooms of Romanism in Germany and elsewhere in Europe, was one of the earliest perils of Protestantism. Nothing but an overruling providence could have saved from utter ruin any moral and religious movement for which the lecherous Henry VIII. stood sponsor. This English monarch, after having denounced Luther, as we have already seen, afterwards applied to him for indorsement of his proposed divorce from Catharine of Aragon. Luther and the other Wittenberg doctors disapproved this unjustifiable separation; but of course their opinion had little weight with a man who had already made up his mind to rid himself of one wife that he might take another one. But a more embarrassing situation developed nearer home. Philip of Hesse was an ardent friend of the Reformation. His courage and impetuous daring made him the dread of the Romanists and the terror of all opponents of the Protestant movement. His departure from Augsburg, when Charles had demanded submission from the Lutherans, changed the whole situation there. If war should finally come between the Protestants and the Catholics, no prince would be more needed than

Philip. But Philip confessed to Luther that he was not satisfied with the wife that was lawfully his, and asked if he might take another, as Abraham had done. Philip did not ask for permission to do this, but really announced his purpose to do so any way, and it would seem simply sought Luther's approval as a sort of salve to his conscience. We may be certain that the question greatly embarrassed Luther. His answer made a virtue of necessity. He advised Philip that if he did take another wife, he should do so privately. This affair has brought reproach upon Luther, his enemies charging him with the approval, if not the advocacy, of polygamy. Only this much may be truthfully admitted in this matter. Luther took the Bible as the standard of his faith. The Old Testament has often been construed into favoring polygamous marriages. In his early ministry Luther was inclined to accept this view in justification of such marriages in exceptional cases. Later, when he became a husband himself and entered more fully into the spirit of the New Testament, he did not accept this view as unqualifiedly as he did at first. Rome had invested marriage with all the sanctity of a sacrament, at least in theory; but this teaching had not and has never saved Catholic profligacy. Luther utterly rejected this doctrine concerning marriage. He believed in the Bible, hence his ideas were not fully clarified as to Christian marriage.

Charles V. really desired a reconciliation between his German subjects. His every interest as emperor made this important, if not essential. All of his efforts in

this matter, however, had the discount of one weakness. He hoped to bring about a reconcilation of the Protestants with Rome. He believed that this could be effected by mutual concessions. As we have already seen, this was his effort at Augsburg. The utter failure there did not discourage him. Too much was involved for the matter to be given up yet. A new pope Paul III., had succeeded Clement. This pontiff showed a more pacific spirit than any of his immediate predecessors. He gathered about his court some of the ablest and most conservative men of the Catholic Church. His most trusted adviser was the noble Venetian, Contarini. This cardinal held views that were little less advanced than those of Martin Luther himself. He accepted the doctrine of justification by faith alone. He admitted that the Church had been in a sort of Babylonian captivity, as Luther had claimed. He was disposed to treat the Protestants with high consideration. He favored the calling of a general council and, what was more wonderful still, advocated the policy of inviting the Lutherans to take part in this council. This was Charles's proposed method, and had been his plan for some time. And Paul gave it a semiapproval. Negotiations were held with the Protestants looking to this proposed council. A high papal emissary waited on Martin Luther in the interest of this effort. This was a different attitude from that which Rome had hitherto maintained toward this arch heretic. Luther showed scant courtesy to the papal messenger. He told that distinguished personage that if a general council should be held, it

would spend its time in discussing how monks' cowls should be worn, and other such trifles. The papal representative admitted that Luther "had struck the right nail on the head."

The name of this papal nuncio was Vergerius. He did not persuade Luther to accede to the wishes of the emperor, and ostensibly of the pope; but his contact with the Protestants resulted in his own acceptance of the principles of Protestantism.

Luther attended a meeting of the Schmalkaldic Alliance, which met to discuss the advisability of attending the proposed council. He advised the members of the League to accept the proffered invitation. But he fell dangerously sick before the matter was disposed of, and his advice was not taken in the premises.

The last effort made in Germany to effect a reconciliation between the Protestants and the Catholics was at a diet held at Ratisbon in 1541. Distinguished representatives of Catholicism and of Lutheranism were in attendance at the instance of the emperor. Bucer and Melanchthon were present as representatives of Protestantism, and the liberal and cultured Contarini and other distinguished Romanists were present. It was a notable body of notable men, actuated by a laudable desire for peace. Some statements touching fundamentals were agreed upon, and the leaders were fain to believe that a reconciliation would be reached. But the effort came to naught. The pope disapproved of the concessions Contarini had granted the Protestants, and that ecclesiastic was received very coldly on his return to Rome. The Catholics of Ger-

many were equally displeased with the terms of the proposed reconciliation.

While there were hindrances, the Reformation went forward steadily. The Protestants themselves were not fully in accord as to doctrines. Luther's strenuous devotion to his doctrine of the real presence in the Eucharist involved him and his fellow-reformers in more than one controversy. He was peculiarly sensitive as to this doctrine. In nothing else was he more dogmatic and less tolerant. The Protestanism of the twentieth century may be disposed to look upon this view of the sacrament as smacking strongly of Catholicism, but Luther himself did not so regard the matter. To him his belief was a vital part of his own faith and of the true faith of the Church. At one time there seemed a probability of a breach between Melanchthon and himself because of what seems to have been a modification of Melanchthon's views touching this doctrine. It may be, however, that Melanchthon's love of peace was stronger than his sense of the importance of Luther's teaching as to the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Duke George, with whom Luther had many a tilt, died at last, and was succeeded in his duchy by his brother Henry. Henry was a Protestant, and forthwith added his territory to the Protestant portion of Germany, and thus materially strengthened the political power of the Reformation. Later Henry was succeeded by his son, Maurice, who figured quite conspicuously, if not always usefully, in the after history of Protestantism.

Luther had his trials and griefs as well as his successes. His special friend, Agricola, adopted antinomian ideas and proclaimed his views in the pulpit at Wittenberg. Luther rebuked him, and he promised amendment. But his convictions or his prejudices were stronger than his sense of obligation in connection with this promise, and he offended again and again. At last an invitation to go to Prussia to take an important position in the newly established Protestant Church in that part of Germany rid Luther of this very troublesome individual.

The form of government the new Church should adopt was a matter that necessarily came up for settlement early in the Reformation. The Protestants were not likely to accept anything that savored of popery. Luther rejected altogether the doctrine of apostolic succession. He would have no ordination to the office of bishop that came by way of the popes. A bishopric became vacant. John Frederick, who had succeeded his father, the worthy John, in the electorate of Saxony, chose Luther's associate in the Reformation, Amsdorf, and Luther himself ordained that ecclesiastic to the office of the first Protestant bishop in Germany. He was assisted in the service by several other preachers, and he asked the people to give their assent to the selection by saying "Amen," which the congregation did very heartily.

Even the last years of Luther's life were not free from controversy. The faithful watchman upon the towers of Zion allowed no enemy to approach unawares. As usual, he was bitter against the pope. His

antipathy to the occupant of the papal see grew stronger with his advancing years. His hatred of the papacy even entered into his prayers. He said that instead of the pope being the holy father he was the "hellish father." If this language seems severe, we must remember, as Froude says, that "Luther saw the wolf without any sheep's clothing."

For more than twenty years (ever since the days of the indulgences) Luther had a controversy, active or in a state of temporary suspension, with Archbishop Albert. That ecclesiastic had certainly not lived a life that was above reproach. At last he added to his many other immoralities the murder, under the pretense of law, of a trusted financial agent, to hide from his constituents the base uses to which he had put the money which he had wrung from them. Albert was a relative of the electoral family of Saxony, but Luther made an attack on him at this time which was full of bitter denunciation. He called Albert a murderer, and declared that he ought to be hanged upon a gallows ten times as high as that on which his poor victim was executed. Albert owed his elevation to the cardinal's position to Luther, the pope giving him this place as a sort of rebuke to Luther for the latter's fight on indulgences; but Luther was a thorn in his side all his life.

Luther had the great satisfaction of seeing his friend, Justus Jonas, installed as pastor in one of the principal Churches of Halle, which had been one of the favorite residences of the Cardinal Albert and the scene of much of his debauchery.

For many years Charles had promised a general council to take into account the abuses that had grown up in the Church of Rome, and had held this out as an olive branch to the Protestants. For many reasons, chief among which was the unwillingness of the popes to call such a gathering, the promise was long in fulfillment. At last, only a few months before Luther died, the Council of Trent met in the city of the Tyrol which gave its name to the gathering. This historic body sat intermittently, at Trent and at Bologna, from 1545 to 1563. Of course the doings of the council of Trent do not enter into the facts of Luther's life, but it may be stated truthfully that but for the work of Luther the pope would not have called a general council at this time. If the Council of Trent corrected any of the wrongs of the Church (and Catholics believe that it did), due credit should be given to the man who had dared to call attention to these evils. Luther, under ban for much of his life, was nevertheless the most helpful man of his age to the very Church that had condemned him and would gladly have lighted a bonfire about his body that would have illuminated all the world.

This study of Martin Luther's connection with the great Reformation may properly close with the following summary of his teachings. It is taken from the article on Luther in the *Universal Encyclopedia,* by Dr. Henry E. Jacobs, Professor of Divinity in the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia:

1. The entire corruption of human nature by sin, the consequent divine wrath and condemnation, and natural inability

for self-recovery or response to the first approaches of divine grace.

2. God's grace and mercy received entirely from his grace and free will, and not from any preceding disposition of sinful man. In his earlier years Luther taught absolute predestination.

3. The vicarious sufferings of Christ as the price of man's redemption, the sufferings of the human nature having acquired infinite efficacy by its union with the divine nature in the one divine, human person.

4. Justification is not an internal change in man, but is an external act of God alone, whereby, for the sake of Christ's merits, received by faith, he forgives sin and pronounces sinful man righteous.

5. Faith is a work of the Holy Ghost in man wrought through the means of grace, and its essential factor is personal confidence in the merits of Christ.

6. The means of grace are the Word and sacraments, which are inseparably attended by the Holy Spirit, so that they are never without efficacy, although this efficacy does not work so as to save those who repel the Spirit's approaches.

7. Baptism is a means both of regeneration and renewal. Those who after baptism fall from baptismal grace return by faith to the covenant first made in baptism. All repentance is a return to baptism.

8. The presence of the body and blood of Christ and its reception in the bread and wine are the surest pledge of the accomplished fact of redemption and its application to the individual believer. Like absolution, its effects are the individualization of the general promise of the gospel; only the Lord's Supper accompanies the individualization, with the elements and with the heavenly gifts attending them as seals and pledges of the promise.

9. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the final judge of all controversies; but everything in the constitution and worship of the Church not contrary to Scripture is to be retained and thankfully used.

10. In the New Testament, besides the priesthood of our High Priest, Jesus Christ, there exists only the spiritual priesthood of all believers, since they have access to Christ directly, and without the mediation of saints, angels, or any priestly order.

11. The ministry and the priesthood are therefore distinct institutions. The ministry belongs to the whole Church, but its duties are to be exercised only by those who are duly called and set apart to this purpose In exceptional cases, however, the power inherent in any Christian congregation may admit of a ministry arising anew from within.

CHAPTER XX.

Luther at Home and among His Friends.

Martin Luther's life was one long battle. From the day he first realized his need of personal salvation to the day of his death there was unceasing conflict. But his contention was never selfish or personal. His battle was for the truth and for others.

There was one place, however, where there was peace. This was his home. He was happily married indeed, and his home life was beautiful. In the bosom of his family he found a haven of rest, and in the love of his Katharina he found the solace which gives strength. His own happy marriage inspired this tribute to the married state and to a good wife: "Next to God's Word the world has no more precious treasure than holy matrimony. God's best gift is a pious, cheerful, God-fearing, home-keeping wife, with whom you may live peacefully, to whom you can trust your goods and body and life."

Kaṭharina certainly filled as well as inspired this ideal. She was a sensible, industrious woman, with domestic tastes and habits, whose sole ambition was to be a good wife and mother. But she was no mere weakling, and was something better than a domestic drudge. Luther delighted in her practical ways. He used to help her about the garden, took an interest in her fishpond, and sympathized fully and practically with all her common-sense schemes for the improvement of domestic conditions.

Katharina took full charge of the domestic establishment and all its affairs, and thus greatly relieved Luther from what might otherwise have been a great burden. She practiced great economy, as she had need to do, and made the small salary of her husband suffice for all the needs of the household. Their home, as we have seen, was in the old Augustine monastery. This establishment seems to have been turned over to Luther under a sort of life tenure. It was not finished when Luther and his wife took possession of it as their home, and it seems to have remained thus for most of the time afterwards. It stood near the town wall, and Luther's study was a little gable room overlooking this and the river. Some part of the building, this room included, seems to have been removed in order to make room for the city's fortifications. A room is still preserved, however, which is shown as Luther's room. This was probably the family sitting room.

When Luther and his good frau began to keep house their income was quite modest. His salary was a hundred gulden, equal to less than four hundred dollars. After his marriage this was increased to two hundred gulden. Later still another hundred gulden was added to his stipend. In the course of time, as Luther's name and influence spread abroad, he received many presents from distinguished men all over Protestant Germany, and even from foreign countries. The king of Denmark, after embracing the Lutheran faith, added an annuity to his salary which materially increased his income. But Luther was too liberal to become rich, even if his salary had been much larger.

He was quick to respond to every appeal for help. Once when he had no money of his own on hand, he took a small sum of money that had been left by the godfather of one of his children as a token of good will to the little fellow, at the time only a few days old, and gave it to a poor man who told a sad story of want. But the necessities of his growing family constrained him to be more thrifty than he would otherwise have been. As already noted, he purchased a little farm, also built a little home in Wittenberg itself, and sought to make provision for his family after his death.

Luther's mother died about four years after his father passed away. His brother James received the real estate of his father, but paid Martin some two hundred and fifty gulden for his interest in the property. This was equivalent to some eight or nine hundred dollars. This patrimony showed how thrifty Luther's father had been, and how successful in business.

He was very fond of his wife, and with a love of humor that was irrepressible he frequently teased her. He told her once that he would give her fifty gulden if she would read the whole Bible through; and he told his friends that she became greatly interested in it at once. He told her that his first opinion of her (that she was proud) was correct, and laughingly called himself her servant. One of his last letters to her, written only a short time before he died, and sent from his birthplace, whither he had gone to settle a dispute between the counts of Mansfeld, bears this humorous address: "To my beloved housewife, Kath-

arina, Lady Luther, Lady Doctor, Lady of the Pig Market at Wittenberg, my gracious wife, bound hand and foot in gracious service."

The home of these two was a thoroughly religious one. Every morning, with his household, he would repeat the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, and always included one of the Psalms. He did this, he said, to keep the mildew from gathering on his faith. No one entered that home (and many entered it) who did not receive a breath of the religious atmosphere that pervaded it. Luther the father and Luther the husband and Luther the head of the household was as consistently religious as Luther the reformer. Like David returning from the sacred task of depositing the Ark in Jerusalem, Luther came from his labors to bless his own household.

Six children in all were born to Luther and his good Katharina. The first of these, as we have seen, was John, who received his grandfather's name. He came about midsummer, 1526. The next year Elizabeth was born. She lived only eight months, when, as her father expressed it, "she said good-by and went to Jesus—through death to life." Luther marveled that the death of the little one made him so sick at heart—"almost womanish," he said.

In 1529 Magdalene, always known in the family as Lena, took the place of the little Elizabeth, and from her very infancy seemed to get into the very heart of her father. She was Luther's favorite child. Her picture shows that she was like her father in some of her features, and her eyes seem to have been strikingly

like his. She died when entering her teens, and her death was deep sorrow to Luther. Her illness was long and painful. While she was sick her father said: "I love her very much indeed; but, dear God, if thou willest to take her home, I would gladly she were with thee." "Lena, dear little daughter, thou wouldst gladly remain here with thy father; art thou willing to go to that other Father?" he asked of the dying child. "Yes," she answered; "Just as God wills." He knelt by her bed and prayed for her salvation, and the dear girl died in his arms. As she lay in her coffin her father looked at the sweet, placid face of his darling and exclaimed: "Ah, my darling Lena! thou wilt rise again, and shine like a star. Yea, like the sun!" And then he added: "I am happy in the spirit, but in the flesh I am sorrowful. The flesh will not be subdued." To the weeping members of his household and their sympathetic friends he said triumphantly: "I have sent a saint to heaven! If my death could be like hers, I would welcome death this very moment."

Those who have had a similar sorrow will understand the grief of Luther. He wrote to Jonas: "You will have heard that our dearest child is born again in the eternal kingdom of God. We ought to be glad at her going, for she is taken away from the world, the flesh, and the devil. But so strong is natural affection that we cannot bear it without anguish of heart, without the sense of death in ourselves. When I think of her words and her gestures when she was with us, and in her departing, even Christ's death cannot relieve my agony."

On her tombstone he wrote this epitaph:

> Here I, Lena, Luther's daughter, rest—
> Sleep in my little bed with all the blest.
> In sin and trespass was I born;
> Forever thus was I forlorn!
> And yet I live, and all is good—
> Thou, Christ, redeem'st me with thy blood!

In 1531 Luther's second son was born. As his birth was close to his father's birthday, if not actually on it, he received his father's name. Two years later another son came, and to this one Luther gave the name of Paul, expressing the hope at his baptism that the child might show in his life some of the characteristics of his ancient namesake. A little girl, who received the good German name of Margaret, completed the household of children.

Luther, as much engrossed as he was with his multiplicity of work and interests, did not neglect his children. He recognized the obligation to train them from birth in the ways of righteousness and to fit them for ways of usefulness by giving them the best possible education within his means. For this last purpose he employed private tutors for his sons, and afterwards sent John away from home because there was no school in Wittenberg quite suitable for the boy. This oldest son seems to have been a bit spoiled, having given his father and mother some trouble.

Children always interested Luther. Their innocent prattle, their unquestioning faith, their joyous hopefulness, their abounding life—all these characteristics of

childhood made children his constant study and delight. His great heart was never far removed from the child heart. As we have already seen, some of the monumental work of his life was done in the preparation of his catechisms.

One of the inmates of his home was Lena von Bora, a maiden aunt of his wife's. She had been at the same convent as had Katharina, and head nurse of the establishment. After leaving the convent, and after Luther's marriage to her niece, she came to the home of the two and lived in his family as a sort of mother to the two and as a grandmother to their children. No member of the family was more beloved. It was she to whom Luther referred in his letter to Hans as Aunt Lena. She died when these children were still very young, and Luther said to her as she was passing away: "You will lie down as in a cradle, and sleep, and when the morning dawns you will awake and live forever. You will not die."

A niece of his own, Lena Kaufmann, was also a dweller in his hospitable home. Luther was a sort of second father to her, and had the pleasure of giving her in marriage to a worthy young man in Wittenberg. It seems that there was also another niece, but little is known of her beyond her name.

Besides these, there were boarding students in the family, the privilege of sitting at Luther's table being eagerly sought by young and old. Luther was generally very communicative at table, and some of his sayings—indeed, many of them—have been preserved by some who sat at his table as inmates of the home or

as guests. This "Table Talk" is one of the most interesting memorials of the great reformer, and occasion will be taken in a subsequent chapter to give some extracts from it.

Luther's health was precarious for a number of years. In 1542, believing that his death was near, he made his will. He left all his property to his wife. Nothing that he ever wrote was more characteristic of the man than this will. Here is an extract:

> Finally, seeing I do not use legal forms, for which I have my own reasons, I desire all men to take these words as mine —a man known openly in heaven, on earth, and in hell also; who has enough reputation or authority to be believed better than any notary. To me, a poor, unworthy, miserable sinner, the Father of all mercy has intrusted the gospel of his dear Son, and has made me true and faithful therein, and has so preserved and found me hitherto that through me many in this world have received the gospel and hold me as a teacher of the truth, despite of the pope's ban, and that of emperor, king, princes, priests, and all the wrath of the devil.
>
> Let them believe me also in this small matter, especially as this is mine own hand, not altogether unknown. In hope that it will be enough for men to say and prove that this is the earnest, deliberate meaning of Doctor Martin Luther, God's notary and witness in his gospel, confirmed by his own hand and seal.

This will was duly witnessed, and John Frederick immediately confirmed it.

Luther was duly mindful of the needs and rights of his servants. As early as 1517, while he was still a monk, he had given employment to a sort of half-witted fellow whose name was Wolfgang, or Wolf Siegel. It seems that Luther employed him more

through sympathy than for any special service the poor fellow could render, and for the same reason kept him in his employ as long as he (Luther) lived, and sought to make provision for him when disposing of his little estate. Luther loved to tease him, as he seems to have every one else that he was intimate with, and one of the most amusing mementos of the reformer is a paper that Luther wrote in which he states that the birds had lodged complaint against Wolf for setting traps for them and baiting these traps with grain, and then sleeping till eight o'clock in the morning; while the birds were up and eating the grain without knowing the danger that lurked so near. The paper went on to say that the birds prayed Luther to make Wolf hunt snails and the like in the daytime, instead of trying to catch them. When another servant left Luther's employ, after having done several years of hard and faithful work, Luther, being absent from home at the time, wrote to his wife to give him a substantial token of regard, assuring her that others would remember them as they remembered the servant. Luther realized that his enemies were alert, and only too anxious to find some fault or flaw in his life which might be magnified into a serious offense.

In the stormy times in which Luther lived, and in the storms that entered his own life, it is pleasant to dwell upon his home and home life. Here was peace, here was contentment, here was happiness. He delighted in the companionship of his Katie and his children. They were his joy and his crown. He took an unfailing interest in all that concerned their tem-

poral and spiritual well-being. One of the charms of his home was music. As we have already seen, he played well on the flute. He said that he loved music because it drove the devil away. His Lena learned how to sing before she was four years old. He wrote with pride of this fact to one of his friends. The home of the reformer was ideal.

Prince Bismarck once said that you never knew a man until you knew the enemies he had made—a sentiment quite in keeping with the character of the builder of the present German Empire. It is truer still that you cannot know an individual until you know the friends he has made, and the means by which he has made those friends. We have seen something of the enemies Martin Luther made, and the reasons for the enmities cherished against him even until this day. It is pleasant to turn from this phase of his history and give some attention to those whom Luther loved and trusted as his friends, and who in turn looked upon him with the warmest affection. Luther never sought or won friends by flattery or policy. He was always too intensely earnest in his convictions to be guilty of lowly fawning. He gave proper reverence to those in authority because of their official place, but he never bowed the knee of suppliant submission before popes or princes. He was as nearly fearless as any man that ever lived, and his manner corresponded with his positive convictions. Some of the things he wrote and spoke were not merely aggressive; they were sometimes fierce and violent. The reason he used no stronger language in his invectives against the papacy

and its abettors was because his mother tongue afforded no stronger words. Such a man would most surely make enemies, and such a man would as surely win friends.

Reference has already been made to the friendship between Luther and Melanchthon. This friendship continued uninterruptedly for at least thirty years. Luther used the most endearing terms in writing to Melanchthon. He opened his inmost soul to Philip. He sought his sympathy in the severest trials of his life. He was always ready to give more credit than the impartial historian gives to Melanchthon in the work of the great Reformation. He said that he was like the woodman who blazes the way through the wilderness; while Philip was the builder who turned the trees the pioneer had cut down into the great structure. A theological work by Melanchthon, called "Loci Communes," and which was perhaps the first effort to systematize the teachings of Protestantism, had Luther's unqualified indorsement and his highest praise as well.

As we have seen, Luther had warm friends among the nobility. It seems certain that Charles V. recognized his worth of character and was as kindly disposed toward him as was possible under the circumstances. The ban under which he placed the reformer did not represent his personal feelings toward Luther, but was the product of his connection with Romanism.

The Elector Frederick was a most helpful friend to Luther, and protected him when it was not popular, if even safe for himself to do so, and came at last, as

we have seen, to accept the Lutheran views, though he never openly committed himself to Protestantism. But Frederick did not take Luther into close personal relations. The only time Luther ever saw this royal friend was when he stood before the Diet of Worms. But a different relation existed between Luther and John. When John Frederick came to the electoral throne Luther had the fullest personal access to him. In fact, the young elector regarded Luther as his spiritual father; while Sibyl, John Frederick's lovable consort, opened her young and trustful heart fully to the reformer. This extract from a note to him from Sibyl is a pleasing proof of this. She tells Luther of the absence of her husband, and says that she would be glad to receive a word in her loneliness from "her true friend, and a lover of the Word of God," and closes her letter thus: "You will greet your dear wife very kindly for us, and wish her many thousand good-nights, and if it is God's will, we shall be very glad to be with her some day, and with you also as well as with her. This you may believe of us at all times."

When John lay dying, Luther was hastily summoned to his bedside, but arrived too late to have any intelligent communication with the elector in his last hours.

Mention has already been made of Luther's desperate illness at Schmalkalden in 1537. It seemed that his last hour had come. His trouble was gravel. His body swelled, and every appliance and remedy gave him no relief. Even then his unfailing humor came out. "The Jews stoned Stephen," he said; "but my stone, the villain, is stoning me." At last he determined to attempt

the journey homeward, preferring to die under his own roof if possible. The elector had been at his bedside, and promised to care for his family, and it was in the royal carriage the sick man began his painful travel. Strangely enough, while he suffered agonies by the way, after the first day's journey of a few miles he obtained relief and subsequently recovered, much to the joy of his friends.

Princes and nobles sought his counsel in all difficult questions, and honored him with their friendship and confidence. They trusted him because he was unselfish and true.

Luther was equally a friend to the common people. He never forgot that he was a peasant by birth. His constant thought was for the moral and religious betterment of his "dear Germans." The poorest of the people had easy access to him, and found him a sympathetic friend. His years in a cloister did not wean his heart away from the people, but seemed to create a deeper love for all classes of people, high and low.

He was always abstemious in his habits; but after he left the monastic life he was utterly free from asceticism. We have already spoken of his humor. This was one of the saving traits of his character. It brightened many a dark hour in his checkered life. It took the sting out of many a sharp speech. It irradiated his whole life and his association with his friends. It softened the asperities of the many controversies in which he was so often engaged, and from which he was never entirely free during the active years of his work as a reformer. His humor was not the

sarcasm of the cynic or of the misanthrope; it was the cheerful spirit of a lover of his fellow-men, whose master passion was a desire to help others. It was not the humor of malevolence, but benevolence. It flashed out in the brightest wit; it shone with the gentlest radiance; it cheered and rejoiced his own heart and the hearts of his friends. It was certainly a part of that wondrous magnetism that attracted and attached men to him. It made Luther a gentleman despite the inherent roughness of his nature, and a friend who went among his fellows with good cheer and good will—"a man and a brother."

CHAPTER XXI.

Luther's "Table Talk."

Of all the memorabilia of Martin Luther that have been preserved, none have interested students of his life more than his *"Tischreden,"* or "Table Talk." Many prominent men sat down at his table in the course of his life, and his guests listened to him as to an oracle. Here men of learning and piety found an intellectual clearing house, where many thoughts and truths and convictions were exchanged, each perhaps feeling that he had received as much as he had given. But the center of this group was always the host himself, generously hospitable, often humorous, and always interesting. Few men of the age had read so much, fewer still knew so much, and none were more generous in dispensing knowledge. It was a liberal education to sit long at that table. Fortunately for history, many things that Martin Luther said at his table and in his home have been preserved. Some of his friends were as faithful to him as Boswell was to old Dr. Samuel Johnson; but in Luther's case the chroniclers did not make the man famous, as in the case of Dr. Johnson. The first edition of Luther's "Table Talk" was published some twenty years after his death, by John Aurifaber, and the volume was an immense quarto of more than twelve hundred pages. It contained the memoranda of Aurifaber himself, and similar memoranda preserved by Mathesius, Veit Dietrich, and

others. The "Table Talk" has been recast a number of times, and has been abridged into a much smaller volume. It has been translated into English and other languages. Possibly these chronicling guests at Luther's table were more faithful than discriminating but what they wrote down at the time of his "Talk" is worth much not merely as an aid to an understanding of Luther himself, but also of the stirring times of the great Reformation. Many a historic sidelight is thrown upon men and measures by the comments of Luther and his friends on passing events.

This chapter will be given to some of the things Luther said to his friends at his own table. Where there is so much that is so good, it is difficult to select that which is best, especially in such a limited space. Such of his sayings will be given as seem to reveal the true character of Martin Luther. Few men have ever lived whose inmost thoughts have been so fully revealed to their fellow-men, and few men could stand a test like this without suffering infinitely more by such a disclosure. In Luther's "Table Talk" we see Martin Luther in mental and spiritual undress, and find but few blemishes.

Here are some of the things that he said about woman, marriage, childhood, and home.

"He that insults preachers of the Word and women will never meet with success. . . . Whosoever condemns them, condemns alike God and man."

"The Saxon law, which assigns as a wife's portion a chair and a distaff, is too severe. It ought to be interpreted liberally, as implying by the first gift the right

of remaining in the dwelling of her husband; and by the second her subsistence, her maintenance. A man pays his servant more liberally; nay, he gives more than this to a beggar!"

Ambrose Brend asked the hand of Luther's niece in marriage, and, as already mentioned, Luther united the two in wedlock. One day before they were married Luther came upon them apart, whispering and laughing after the manner of lovers, and exclaimed: "I don't wonder at a bridegroom having so much to say to his betrothed. And persons so circumstanced never grow weary of each other's company. So far, however, from putting any restraint upon them, I hold them privileged above law and custom."

On the occasion of the marriage of the two, he made use of these words: "Sir and dear friend, I here give unto you this young maiden, such as God in his goodness bestowed her upon me; I confide her to you. May God bless you and render your union holy and happy."

"Do as I myself did," said Luther to one of his friends, "when I was desirous of taking my dear Katharina to wife. I offered up my prayers to our Lord. I prayed earnestly. Do thou pray earnestly also. Thou hast not yet done so."

Teasing his wife on one occasion, he said laughingly to her: "Did you say the Lord's Prayer before you began your admirable sermon? If you had, God would assuredly have prevented you from preaching."

"If," said he on one occasion, evidently in the same spirit, "I were to marry again, I would carve for my-

self an obedient wife out of a block of marble; for unless I did so, I should despair of finding one."

"There ought to be no interval between the betrothal and the marriage," he declared. "Oftentimes the friends of both parties interpose obstacles."

"When Eve was brought unto Adam," he remarked once, "he became filled with the Holy Spirit, and gave her the most sanctified, the most glorious of all appellations. He called her Eva—that is to say, the mother of all. He did not call her wife, but simply mother—the mother of all living creatures. In this consists the glory and the most precious ornament of woman. She is *fons omnium viventium*—the source of all human life. This is a brief phrase. But neither Demosthenes nor Cicero could have paralleled it. It is the Holy Ghost himself who spoke thus through the medium of our first parent. As he has herein conveyed so noble an eulogium upon the marriage state, it is for us to conceal the frailty of woman. Nor did Jesus Christ the Son of God contemn the marriage state. He himself was born of a woman, which is of itself the highest eulogy that could be pronounced on marriage."

Seeing his little children looking with eager hope and wistfulness at some fruit served on the table, Luther exclaimed: "Whoso would behold the image of a soul which enjoys the fullness of hope may find it in these infants. Ah, if we could but await with such joyful expectations for the life to come!"

Once the mother brought little Magdalene to her father, that she might sing a favorite hymn for him.

The child showed reluctance, and the mother was ready to use force; but Luther interposed. "Nothing good comes of violence. Without grace, the works of the law are nought."

One day when his wife placed one of their children, an infant, in his arms, he declared: "I would willingly have died at the age of this child; I would willingly have renounced for that all the honor I have gained and all I am still to acquire in the world."

"Children, after all, are the happiest. We older fools constantly torment ourselves and bring affliction on us by our eternal disputes about the Word. Is it true? Is it possible? How is it possible? These are our incessant inquiries. Whereas children, in the simplicity and purity of their faith, possess a certainty, and doubt of nothing in which their salvation is concerned. In order to be saved, we ought to imitate their example and hold fast to the Word of God alone." This was a lesson he got on one occasion.

Nature was full of meaning and truth to Luther. Flowers, trees, plants, fruit, all taught and illustrated some divine lesson to his devout soul. One day he was walking in his garden in early spring, when, looking at all the verdure about him, he burst out: "Glory to God, who, from the dead creation thus raises up life again in the springtime. Behold these branches, how strong, how beautiful they are! Already they teem and are big with the fruit they will bring forth. They offer a beautiful image of the resurrection of all men. The winter season represents death; the sum-

mertide the resurrection. Then all things live again; all is verdant."

After a spring shower, which had greatly refreshed all nature, he turned his eyes toward heaven and exclaimed: ". . . Thou has granted to us, O Lord, this bounty—to us, who are so ungrateful to thee, so full of wickedness and avarice. But thou art a God of goodness! This is no work of the devil! No; it is a bounteous thunder which shakes the earth and rouses it, cleaving it, that its fruits may come forth and spread a perfume like to that which is diffused by the prayer of a Christian."

The summer fields, covered with ripening wheat, so inspired him with gratitude that he broke forth in this earnest prayer and thanksgiving: "O, God of all goodness, thou hast bestowed upon us a year of plenty; but not because of our piety, O Lord, but in order to glorify thy holy name. Cause us, O Lord, to amend our lives and to increase in faith and in the belief of thy holy Word. All in and around thee are miracles. Thy voice causes to spring out of the earth and out of the sand of the desert these beautiful plants, these green blades, which so rejoice the eye. O, Father, give unto all thy children their daily bread."

Observing the shyness of two birds that were building their nest in his garden, he said to the little creatures: " 'Ah, poor little birds, fly not away! I wish you well with all my heart, if you would only believe me.' Thus we ourselves refuse to trust in God, who, so far from willing our condemnation, has given for us his own Son!"

Luther had constantly in mind the Bible and its truths, and wrote with a piece of chalk on the wall behind his stove, where he could see them constantly when in his room, these words from the sixteenth chapter of St. Luke: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Pointing to this once he said: "The child Jesus still sleeps in the arms of Mary, his mother. He will awake one day and call us to account for what we have done."

He said while being shaved one day that humanity was much like the beard, and needed constant attention and watching. "Human nature has not any understanding, not even a sentiment, respecting that mortal malady by which it is overwhelmed."

Some one asked Luther if an injured party was bound to go to the party who had injured him and ask his pardon. He answered with emphasis: "No; Jesus Christ himself has not left us such an example, nor has he anywhere commanded it to be done. It is sufficient if we pardon offenses in our heart (publicly when occasion calls on us to do so), and that we pray for those who have injured us or offended us. I myself went on one occasion to two persons who had injured me, Agricola and Dr. Jerome Schuff, but it fell out by chance that neither of them was at home, so I came back and made no other endeavor to see them. I now return thanks to God that I was not permitted to do so, as I then wished."

Speaking of pilgrimages, he said: "In former times, under the papacy, pilgrimages were undertaken to visit

the saints. People went to Rome, to Jerusalem, to St. Iago of Compostella, to expiate their sins. Nowadays we perform our Christian pilgrimages by means of faith. When we read diligently the prophets, the Psalms, and the Gospels, we arrive not to the Holy City, but through our hearts and thoughts even unto God. This is journeying to the real land of promise, the paradise of eternal life."

A preacher sent an inquiry to Luther as to the propriety of baptizing infants in warm rather than cold water. "Tell that blockhead," returned Luther, "that water is water, whether cold or hot." Evidently the people of Luther's time were not unlike some of a later generation. He said that they criticised preachers, and objected to certain mannerisms. There was Justus Jonas, for instance, who was a good preacher; but the people criticise him because he "hums and spits." He said with characteristic good humor that he thought preachers ought to be handsome men, "so as to please the ladies." He teased his friends who took such careful note of what he said, and played at least one practical joke on them.

Luther did not think much of saints, a fact which illustrates the great revolution that had taken place in his religious convictions. "What are saints," he asked, "in comparison with Christ? They are no more than the sparkling drops of the night dew on the head of the bridegroom."

He did not attach much importance to the evidential value of miracles. "The convincing testimony," he asserted, "is to be found in the Word of God. Our ad-

versaries," he went on, "read the translation of the Bible much more frequently than we do. I believe that Duke George has read it more carefully than any one of the noblemen who are with us. He said to some one: 'If that monk but finishes his translation of the Bible, he may take his departure as soon as he likes.' "

This was a realistic expression of his faith: "Let our enemies indulge their transports of rage; God has not set up a stone wall to confine the waves of the ocean, nor has he controlled them by a mountain of steel. He thought it enough to place a shore, a boundary of sand."

This statement reveals much of his experience as a Romanist: "I read very much in my Bible while I was a monk, during my youth; but this availed me nothing. I simply looked upon Christ as another Moses." But if he had not read his Bible, he would never have discovered that Jesus was something more than another lawgiver.

Luther set a proper estimate upon the Ten Commandments. "The natural moral law is nowhere so well set forth and written down as by Moses." He thought the world would be much better governed if more of the Mosaic law were incorporated into civil laws, especially the law of divorce, of the jubilee, and of tithes.

"The Lord's Prayer is that which I prefer," he said. "I constantly repeat it, mingling with it sentences from the Psalms. The Lord's Prayer has no equal among prayers. I like it better than any of the Psalms."

Luther had read and studied the fathers of the Church quite thoroughly and quite discriminatingly.

He thought Augustine superior to any of them—a very natural opinion. His judgment of these ancient writers was summed up in the sentence: "They lived better than they wrote. Since I became by the grace of God capable of understanding St. Paul," he added, "I have been unable to esteem any of these doctors; they have shrunk into insignificance in my estimation."

He makes this admission: "I admit that I have been guilty of too much violence, but never with regard to the papacy. There ought to be set aside for the special service of the popish battle a tongue every word of which is a thunderbolt." In another reference to his own methods he said: "I have attacked the manners of the popes, as did Erasmus and John Huss; but I leveled the two pillars upon which popery rested—namely, vows and private masses."

Luther never expected a general council, nor anything good from one if it should be held. "It seems to me that we shall not have one until the day of judgment. Then our Lord God himself will hold a general council."

During the debate at Heidelberg some one asked how the monks originated. Luther gave this answer: "God having ordained the priesthood, the devil, as usual, wished to imitate what he had done; but he shaved too much of the hair off his men."

Luther advocated public schools, favoring special schools for females. Children, he thought, should be kept at study for at least an hour every day, the rest of the time being given to the acquisition of some useful trade. The reformer appreciated the importance of pub-

lic libraries, equipped with books in the German language—books whose subjects should embrace all branches of learning as well as general information. In what he said in his "Table Talk" touching these matters it is easy to find the germs of many intellectual plants that have since grown up in Germany.

"Wisdom, understanding, learning, and the pen—these do govern the world. If God were angry and took out of the world all the learned then all people would become like wild and savage beasts." So said the man who was seeking the uplift his generation, and with it all the world.

Luther thought highly of music not merely as an art but as a moral help. "Music is one of the most delightful and magnificent presents that God has given us. Satan is the inveterate enemy of music, for he knows that by its aid we drive away temptations and evil thoughts; he cannot make headway against music." After hearing some sweet music in his home one evening he exclaimed: "If our Lord grants us such noble gifts as these in our present life, what will it not be in the life eternal?"

Luther, though by no means free from superstition, had no faith whatever in astrology, and ridiculed its predictions with much sarcasm. "It may be very true that astrologists can predict to the wicked their future destiny and announce to them the death that awaits them, for the devil knows the thoughts of the wicked and has them in his power."

"Speaking of signs," he said, "I believe they are for the most part delusions of the devil."

His ideas of preaching were thoroughly practical. Some one complained to him that it was not always possible to follow him in his sermons. Luther replied: "I cannot always follow myself. If I had my life to live over, I would make my sermons much shorter, for I am conscious that they have been too wordy." Erasmus Albertus asked Luther for some advice as to how he should preach before the Elector of Brandenburg, to whom he was to be pastor. Luther answered: "Your sermons should be addressed not to princes and nobles, but to the rude, uncultivated commonalty. If in my discourses I had to be thinking about Melanchthon and the other doctors, I should do no good at all. But I preach in plain language to the plain, unlearned people, and that pleases all parties. If I know the Greek, Hebrew, and Latin languages, I reserve them for our learned meetings, where they are of use; for at these we deal in such subtleties and profundities so much that God himself, I wot, must sometimes wonder at us."

His fearlessness in the pulpit is fully voiced in this declaration: "I am very far from thinking myself faultless, but I may at least boast with St. Paul that I cannot be accused of hypocrisy and that I have always spoken the truth; perhaps, indeed, somewhat too harshly. I would rather offend man by the acerbity of my language in diffusing the truth than offend God by keeping the truth captive in my breast. If the grandees are offended at my manner of preaching, they are quite at liberty to leave me to myself. I and my doctrine can do without them. I do them no wrong, no injustice. The sins I myself commit it is for God to pardon."

Some of Luther's biographers have seemed to take pleasure in exploiting his superstition as that superstition is revealed in his "Table Talk." It may be said once for all that Luther, while in advance of his age in many things, had not fully shaken off the superstitions that the Romish Church had bound about him in his early life, and he was never entirely free from them. It would be manifestly unfair to compare this enlightened man of the sixteenth century with the enlightened men of the twentieth century.

A few detached aphoristic sayings will conclude our quotations from the "Table Talk."

"There is an undying antagonism between the lawyers and the theologians."

"I leave the shoemaker, the tailor, and the lawyer in their proper places. But let them beware how they intrude upon my province."

"I care not for any law that does wrong to the poor."

"There is but one single point in all theology—genuine faith and confidence in Jesus Christ. This article comprehends all the rest."

"Our faith is an unutterable sigh."

"Ah, how painful it is to lose a friend that one has tenderly loved."

"Good and true theology consists in practice, use, and exercise. Its basis and foundation is Christ."

"We fear the cloud, and distrust the rainbow."

"That same 'why' hath done us a great deal of harm. It was the cause of Adam's destruction."

"I fear two things, epicurism and enthusiasm; these are the schisms that are still to come."

"The devil is a haughty spirit, and can't bear to be treated with contempt in any way."

"We are our own jailers."

"He who destroys the doctrine of the law, at the same time destroys social and political order."

"One of these days some new books will be started in competition, and the Holy Scriptures will be slighted, despised, jerked into a corner—thrown, as they say, under the table."

"That which contributes in no slight degree to affect and try men's hearts is that God seems to them capricious and changeable."

"We need not invite the devil to our table. He is too ready to come without being asked."

"The devil fears the Word of God. He can't bite it. It breaks his teeth."

"Faith is a wonderful thing. It makes the weak strong."

CHAPTER XXII.

Luther's Last Days.

Martin Luther was a marvel of diligence. Reared in a home where industry was a law, he was true to his tutelage. He did not relax for anything but sickness. He had many helpers in his great labors as time went on, but to the day of his death there were delicate and vital tasks which he alone could carry to a successful finish. He spent much of his time for a quarter of a century in the translation of the Bible. He went over this again and again. He not only studied Hebrew that he might render the Old Testament into German; he studied German itself. He took every opportunity to become acquainted with the language spoken by the common people. He used his own observation and the observation of his friends to arrive at this acquaintance. And has already been stated, he helped more than any other one individual of his own age or any subsequent age in fixing the German vernacular.

And he wrought in many other fields. If all that he wrote on various subjects, notably if his controversial writings be taken into account, the outcome of his life work in this particular seems enough to absorb the full sixty-three years that he lived.

Next to his translation of the Bible itself, and possibly to his catechisms, his most valuable literary work was his commentaries on various parts of the Bible. These

of course originated in his lectures at Wittenberg. Reference has already been had to his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, and to the effect it had on the life of John Wesley. It is not too much to say that, after St. Paul, Martin Luther did more than any other man to formulate the doctrine of justification by faith. Martin Luther made this doctrine luminous; John Wesley vitalized it as a Christian experience. To the one it was a dogma; to the other it was a living fact of Christian experience.

Luther continued his lectures up to the last. The year before he died he completed a series of discourses on the book of Genesis. He preached as often as strength and opportunity allowed. He was never the regular pastor of the Wittenberg Churches, but often served in that capacity in the absence of the regular pastors; and even when the regular incumbents were in place he had free access to the pulpit of the university chapel, as well as of all the other pulpits of the little city. In his several journeys he preached everywhere he went if time afforded an opportunity. If he had done no other religious work, his preaching alone would have made his life notable. It may be stated with absolute truth that one of the effects of the great Reformation was to revive the preaching of the gospel. Occasionally here and there during the Middle Ages there had been a man who seemed to realize that he had a message of salvation to men; but the mummeries of the priests from Sabbath to Sabbath at the beginning of the Reformation had little gospel and no vitality.

Luther's life toward its close was overshadowed by the disappointment which invariably enters into the experience of great men who undertake great things for their fellow-men. Hope is an essential element in the mental and moral equipment for such movements, and hope that inspires to heroic effort rarely sees a full consummation of its endeavor. The disappointment of Elijah after Carmel was so bitter that he was ready to die. He believed that the fire from heaven and the shout of the people and the slaughter of the priests of Baal meant the turning of the whole nation to Jehovah again. When he found later that the scenic splendor of the event on Carmel had not brought his loved Israel back to the God of their fathers, he was ready to pronounce sentence of failure upon all that he had done. Deep sadness pervades the later Epistles of St. Paul, and he told the Ephesian elders that he knew that after his death greedy wolves would break into the flock. Every apostle and every reformer and every revivalist has sooner or later realized that as yet it is only a dream that a nation should be born in a day.

Luther was disappointed in the fruits of the Reformation. At first there had been a marked improvement in morals in many places. Later the invariable reaction came on. Even in Wittenberg many of the people went back to their old ways. All this distressed Luther deeply. It gave his enemies occasion to speak against the Protestant movement. They said that it had produced no moral betterment among those who accepted Lutheranism. So seriously did Luther take

all this that he proposed to Katharina that they should retire to their little farm and spend their remaining days in quietude. But of course the friends of Luther and of Lutheranism would not hear to all this. They insisted that Luther was needed as much now as at any time in all the several stages of the Reformation up to this point to aid in correcting the evils of which he complained. The magistrates of Wittenberg promised to take more vigorous steps in suppressing certain abuses and excesses. The situation became so unbearable at one time that he left Wittenberg for a vacation, and was rather tardy about returning. The change helped him in health as well as in spirit, and his neighbors became so much concerned over his protracted absence that the town authorities promised to take immediate action in the matters about which Luther felt so grieved. The Elector John Frederick sent him his private physician to minister to him in some ailment from which he was suffering, and was ready to scold him for going away so unceremoniously.

The situation of the Protestants was grave enough to occasion apprehension. The Council of Trent was coming on. At first there had been the hope that this council would be composed of Protestants as well as Catholics. Charles had intimated as much time and again; and a papal legate, as we have seen, had called on Luther in the interest of such a council. But all hope of anything so irenic was now dispelled. Paul, whatever may have been his views when he entered the Vatican, could not withstand the pressure of the

curia. Few rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, have divested themselves willingly of any of their authority. Luther knew what all this meant, and one of the fiercest attacks he ever made on the papacy was his last one. Reference has already been made to this onslaught.

And there were other troubles. The ambitious and unscrupulous Maurice had succeeded to the Saxon duchy. He was ready to quarrel with his kinsman, John Frederick, over some border rights on the line between their territories. Maurice was nominally Protestant, but like many other princes of his time, his religious views were only secondary and subsidiary to his political ambitions. The friction between his elector and Maurice grieved Luther, and he used his good offices in the interest of peace. In this he was materially aided by Philip of Hesse, whose daughter Maurice had wedded.

The hope that cheered Luther in many of the dark days of his life, and which came to him at this time as a sort of last expectation of relief, was that the second coming of Christ was near at hand. He interpreted various passages in the prophets to mean this, as has already been stated, and the conviction grew stronger as he grew older. He seemed to see no other escape for the Church, and he rejoiced in this hope with increasing satisfaction. Perhaps the hope itself was born of his increasing concern and despondency. This expectation has been the *dernier resort* of many good men in all the ages.

If Luther was at times morbid, as he certainly was, the fact is not a matter of surprise. Indeed, the won-

der is that he was not more so. It was only natural that he should brood over the fact that he was a political outcast. More than this, through many years his mind often turned to thoughts of the enmity of Rome that was liable at any time to vent itself upon him in the cruelest possible death. None but a man mightily upheld of God could have borne the burden of the great Reformation. This was not the burden of a day or a year; it was the burden of a lifetime. Added to all his other cares, for many years of his life his health was precarious. A number of times he seemed in the very grasp of death. Often he was forced to suspend all work for days together on account of physical ailments. He suffered for a score of years with dizziness and pains in his head, and sudden fainting spells. It seems that his heart was involved functionally, if not organically. Deep despondency often settled upon him, and sometimes his harassed soul would break out in bitter denunciation of his enemies and complaints that were like echoes from the plaint of the afflicted man of Uz, if not from the Man of Sorrows himself. Once, so the story goes, he was so sorrowful for days together that his good wife with characteristic good sense decided to employ a novel but effective remedy for his persistent depression. She appeared at table one morning dressed in deep mourning. Luther looked at her in surprise. She answered his look and question with the startling explanation: "The Lord is dead." Luther protested that the Lord could not die. Then the good Katharina told him that he had been so sad of late that she supposed

he had lost his Lord. The appeal was one that would likely strike Luther most effectively, and he rallied.

Most of the time, however, Luther was cheerful; and the very opposition he encountered at every step of his way seemed but to make him stronger and more hopeful. Like the stormy petrel, he walked the waves of his troubled life with a fearlessness that never quailed in the presence of the never-ceasing tempest.

Infirmities came on with advancing years and constant ill health. He declared that he was prematurely old. The years of unwholesome life in the monastery were exacting the tribute for overdrawn strength and an underfed body. His hair turned white. His eyesight failed. His hearing grew dull. Bodily weakness was his constant companion, and ever a matter of weary consciousness. The shadow upon the dial plate of his years would not go backward, and seemed to go onward faster as the sun approached its setting. He knew that his day was nearly done, but the night had no terrors for him. He only hastened to complete the unfinished tasks before the darkness should fall.

There was pathetic fitness in his last journey and his last mission. The counts of Mansfeld had a dispute of long standing. They decided at last to submit the matter to the decision of Martin Luther. These noblemen were willing to risk the justice and impartiality of this son of a peasant. Human authorities had not made him a ruler and a judge over them, but they knew they could trust Luther. Character counts for more than official titles in winning men's confidence.

These counts of Luther's native place were unwittingly paying the highest possible tribute to the integrity of the man whose birth among them sixty years before had attracted no attention outside the narrow circle of the family.

Luther journeyed to Eisleben, his native town, in the middle of the winter of 1545-46 on his mission of peace. It was imprudent for him to make such a trip at this time of year, but he wished to act as mediator between his old neighbors.

This Mansfeld matter really required three journeys to Eisleben. The first of these was made in October. But the counts were not ready. Coming home, he celebrated his last birthday with his family and friends. He was merry and playful, and seemed full of hope. And yet he seemed to have a presentiment of approaching death. But this was no unusual experience with him. He finished his lectures on Genesis in November. In his final words he spoke in modest self-depreciation of his work, and said that he hoped another would be able to prepare a better commentary on this book. He made his second trip to Eisleben about Christmas time, as already stated. He was accompanied by Melanchthon, as well as some others. Melanchthon falling ill, Luther brought him back to Wittenberg. The last journey to Eisleben was made late in January. His three sons and their tutor accompanied him, as did Jonas. He preached at several points along the way. Arriving at Eisleben about January 24, 1546, he was received with distinguished honor. A cavalcade of soldiers escorted him into the

town. He was given quarters in a most comfortable building belonging to the town, and his table was well supplied. He entered at once upon the matters in controversy between the counts. There were tedious details. Lawyers represented the contending parties. Luther sometimes grew impatient and wrote to Katharina that he was ready to "grease his carriage" and *"in mea ira"* start homeward; but he restrained his impatience. He loved all Germany, and his native place especially, and was ready to undergo any reasonable sacrifice for the sake of his compatriots of Mansfeld and Eisleben.

In the meantime the good Katharina was deeply anxious about his health, and she had good reason to be. On his way to Eisleben he had encountered high water, cold winds, and all the frigid uncertainties of a German winter. Luther reassured her and reproved her. He wrote to her three times in fourteen days. One of these letters, and the longest of them, follows. The real Martin Luther is in it. It was written on February 7, 1546, and the original is still preserved in the Rhediger Library, at Breslau. It was this letter that bore the humorous address to his wife already quoted. Here is the letter:

Mercy and peace in the Lord. Pray read, dear Katie, the gospel of St. John and the Catechism, of which you once declared that you yourself had said all that it contained. For you wish to disquiet yourself about your God, just as if he were not almighty and able to create ten Martin Luthers for one drowned perhaps in the Saale or fallen dead by the fireplace or on Wolf's fowling floor. Leave me in peace with your cares. I have a better Protector than you and all the

angels. He (my Protector) lies in the manger, and hangs upon a virgin's breast. But he sits also at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. Rest therefore in peace. Amen.

I think that hell and all the world must now be free from all the devils, who have come together here to Eisleben for my sake, it seems, so hard and knotty is this business. There are fifty Jews here, too, as I wrote you before. It is now said that at Rissdorff, hard by Eisleben, where I fell ill before my arrival, more than four hundred Jews were walking and riding about. Count Albert, who owns all the country round Eisleben, hath seized them upon his property, and will have nothing to do with them. No one has done them any harm as yet. The widowed Countess of Mansfeld is thought to be the protectress of the Jews. I don't know whether it is true, but I have given my opinion in quarters where I hope it will be attended to. It is a case of beg, beg, beg, and helping them. For I had it in my mind to-day to grease my carriage wheels *in mea ira.* But I felt the misery of it too much; my native home held me back. I have been made a lawyer, but they will not gain by it. They had better have let me remain a theologian. If I live and come among them, I might become a hobgoblin who would comb down their pride by the grace of God. They behave as if they were God himself, but must take care to shake off these notions in good time before their Godhead becomes a devilhead, as happened to Lucifer, who could not remain in heaven for pride. Well, God's will be done. Let Master Philip see this letter, for I had no time to write to him; and you may comfort yourself with the thought how much I love you, as you know. And Philip will understand it all.

We live very well here, and the town council gives me for each meal half a pint of "Reinfall." Sometimes I drink it with my friends. The wine of the country here is also good; and Naumberg beer is very good, though I fancy its pitch fills my chest with phlegm. The devil has spoiled all the beer in the world with his pitch, and the wine with his brimstone. But here the wine is pure, such as the country gives.

And know that all letters you have written have arrived, and to-day those have come which you wrote last Friday, together with Master Philip's letters, so you need not be angry.

Sunday after St. Dorothea's day (February 7, 1546).

Your loving MARTIN LUTHER.

A week later he wrote to Katharina telling her of the happy termination of his mission, and rejoicing that God was *"Exauditor precum."* He also sent her a nice lot of trout, a present from Albert, and assured her that he would take his journey homeward during the week. He did take that journey, but went in his coffin. This was his last letter to his beloved Katharina.

Luther's mission to Eisleben was eminently successful. An amicable agreement was reached. Certain questions touching a division of revenue between the Church and the schools were settled, and the schools of this part of Germany are still rejoicing in the fruits of this settlement. The pacification was received with great joy by old and young. On Sunday, February 14, Luther preached for the last time. He cut his sermon short with the remark that there was much more to the gospel, but he was too weak to speak of it then. He had not told all the story (as who has?), and he wanted his hearers to remember the inexhaustible depths of the infinite gospel.

Luther became alarmingly weak after the Sabbath on which he preached his last sermon. The details of the settlement were not fully arranged, but Luther was spared the worry of these. His necessary official sig-

nature to the terms of the agreement was all that was asked of him. As for the rest, all that the most loyal friends and the best skill of the times could do in the way of medical treatment was given to the sick and dying reformer. On Wednesday he complained of oppression in his chest. Hot cloths were used in the afternoon, and he seemed better. That evening at supper he came from his little bedroom and took his place at the supper table. He declared that there was no satisfaction in being alone. He was apparently much better. He talked cheerfully, even merrily, with the company. But as always, there was more than mere pastime in his conversation.

After supper he seemed not so well, but grew easier, and at nine o'clock, as was his wont, he stood in front of the window and, looking out upon the winter night, prayed earnestly. Then he lay down upon a leather lounge in the room, and fell into a peaceful sleep. This lasted for an hour or more, when he awoke and was again given treatment for his shortness of breath. Then he fell asleep again on his bed in his private apartment. After midnight he awoke and complained of being cold. Soon he began to suffer great agony. All efforts to relieve him were in vain. The end was near at hand. He was strong enough to leave his bed and walk from one room to another. "Into thy hands I commend my spirit, O Father!" he cried several times, "for thou hast redeemed me."

Several times he repeated the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of John: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever be-

lieveth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

He threw himself upon his bed once more. His extremities grew cold. Justus Jonas, who had been with him all the time, bent over him and asked: "Venerable father, wilt thou stand by Christ and the doctrines thou hast preached?"

And from the lips of the dying reformer came a whispered but emphatic "Yes." He turned upon his right side, drew one long, deep breath, and was dead. He died between two and three o'clock in the morning of Thursday, February 18, 1546.

Germany had known no more sorrowful night in all its history. A great conqueror had not gone down before the conqueror of all; a great king had not surrendered to the king of terrors. Martin Luther, the great reformer, was no more!

A cry of sorrow went up from all Protestant Germany when it was known that Martin Luther was dead. The Elijah of the great Reformation had fallen. "The chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof" had departed. The mightiest man of his age, and one of the mightiest of all the ages, was ready to be laid in his grave close to the church on whose doors he had posted the theses that stirred the world. But he died not by the hands of the pope nor by the sentence of the princes, but in his own bed, surrounded by his devoted friends, and from natural, providential causes, at the call of his Master.

His papal enemies with Satanic hate sought to libel him even in death. A year before he died they had

circulated a slanderous report of his death and the manner of his passing. The heathen motto: "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum,*" has not restrained the vindictive tongues of the Roman Catholics concerning Martin Luther, lying peacefully in his grave in the churchyard in Wittenberg these four hundred years.

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A last painting of the reformer was made by an humble artist in Eisleben, and a wax bust was made from the body. Friends vied with each other in honoring the man who had honored his people and his Lord. A great funeral procession followed the body on its journey to Wittenberg. In every town and village and hamlet through which the mournful company passed on the sorrowful journey the people rose up to honor the dead man and to weep at his going.

The procession reached Wittenberg on February 24, and here on the day following there was a great funeral, with solemn ceremonies and sorrowful hearts in every home in the little city.

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The centuries have borne testimony to the work of Martin Luther. The Christian world has made up its verdict as to the character of that work; while the man himself, who was only a man, subject to like passions with ourselves, has gone into the presence of the Judge to whom he appealed his case from the decision of popes and diets, and we know that the Judge of all the earth will do right.

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