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The life of Martin Luther

THE LIFE

OF

MARTIN LUTHER.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO

HER GRACE

SUSAN EUPHEMIA,

DUCHESS DOWAGER OF HAMILTON, BRANDON, AND CHATELHERAULT,

&c., &c., &c.,

IN TOKEN OF THE HIGHEST ESTEEM FOR HER

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER,

AND OF GRATITUDE FOR LONG-CONTINUED KINDNESS,

This Biography

IS DEDICATED

PREFACE.

The "Life of Martin Luther" now offered to the public is an attempt to supply a simple, impartial, and truthful narrative of the great Reformer's public acts and personal and domestic history in a succinct and readable form. Although many Biographies of Luther existed previously in foreign languages, it would be difficult to point out one which is in any measure a complete work, or aims at being such; for the custom has been to dilate on the early portions of the Reformer's career, and to finish off the remainder of the story in a few pages or paragraphs. There is indeed no instance besides the life of Luther by Keil, and perhaps one or two more works of the same kind, which has even aspired to chronological arrangement. To the majority of readers, what is known of Luther has probably been derived from the popular work of D'Aubigné, an interesting and graphic, as well as able history, which no candid person would be willing to depreciate: but, besides that it is a history of the Reformation, and not of its principal agent, it does not carry down the narrative lower than the Diet of Augsburg, and Luther's life was

extended nearly as much as sixteen years beyond that date. Whether, however, the present biography has supplied the desideratum which has unquestionably existed, can only be determined by the unbiassed judgment of the public.

The sources of information from which the narrative is drawn are principally the writings of Luther himself, or of his cotemporaries. The writings of Melancthon, Mathesius, Spalatin, Myconius, Cochlæus, and others, are of importance only second to the accounts transmitted by Luther's own pen. The observations of many cotemporaries of what they saw or heard are collected in the careful pages of Seckendorf; and Walch's German edition of Luther's works, in twenty-four parts, published at Halle in 1750, which also contains many documents, public and private, bearing on the Reformation and the great Reformer's career, has been found of essential service. There is also much to be gathered from the less trodden field of epistolary correspondence; and the familiar letters of Melancthon and Erasmus, and Zwingle and Œcolampadius, are considerable helps towards forming a true estimate of the character of persons and of the times. But Luther's own writings are, of course, the best and most authentic ground on which to compile his biography. These have been published in various editions at different times, in Latin and German: but it is a disadvantage that no edition of his works hitherto brought to a close is quite perfect and complete. For the "Acts," or reports of events, conferences, &c., which appeared at the time from the pen of some Wit-

tenberg writer, and answered the same purpose as the newspaper reports of the present day, and which evidently, from the frequent intermixture of the first with the third personal pronoun, were generally revised by the Reformer himself, and therefore are authorised versions of what they relate, references are made for the most part either to the Jena or the Altenberg edition of Luther's works. The references to the Table-talk (Tischreden) are to Förstemann's admirable edition, published at Leipsic in 1844. And great use has been made of De Wette's excellent edition of Luther's letters, published at Berlin in 1825—a source of information altogether invaluable for his biography, as in perusing his unpremeditated familiar correspondence with an infinite variety of characters, monarch and merchant, warrior and scholar, his bosom friends and his acquaintances of yesterday, the biographer in fact takes his seat at the entrances of his heart, and views character and motives in their spring and well-head.

But other means of obtaining information, or of arriving at a fair and impartial estimate of acts and opinions, have not been overlooked. Amongst these may be mentioned such German and French biographies of Luther as have been procurable, as well as the pages of Seckendorf, Sleidan, Father Paul, Pallavicini, Maimburg, &c., and also the more general histories of the period. And the greatest obligation must be acknowledged to the modern historian Ranke, whose stores of information are as immense as his philosophical instructions are invaluable, and who has enjoyed access to manuscript

letters of ambassadors, and others personally engaged in the transactions they record, preserved amongst the archives of Princes and Cities, which throw a new light on history.

It is not pretended that this English biography of Martin Luther has been undertaken in any undecided or lukewarm spirit, as to the comparative merits of Popery and Protestantism. Every one who is blest with common sense and with common honesty must concur with the French author M. Villers, in his "Essay on the Spirit and Influence of the Reformation of Luther," which gained the prize of the National Institute, that, even in a merely temporal point of view, we owe to the Reformation very much of whatever constitutional freedom, civil liberty, social refinement, and improved civilization the nations of Europe enjoy. The blessings of the Reformation are read in the striking difference between the Romanist and Protestant Cantons of Switzerland; in the rarity or almost absence of crime amongst the Waldenses of Piedmont; and the rarity of crime generally in Protestant communities, and their superior tranquillity, morality, and industry, as compared with nations still under the yoke of the most licentious, profligate, and criminal city in the world—the metropolis of Popery. But these undeniable facts do not constitute any inducement for dealing more tenderly than truth demands with the actions and life of the Reformer, to whom more than any other human agent the achievement of that great religious and intellectual revolution is attributable; for had Luther been as

exceptionable a character as Henry VIII. of England, the movement which he originated would nevertheless have to take its stand strictly on its own merits. The endeavour has been to represent Luther such as he actually was; neither to feign motives nor suppress facts: but to give his unbiassed story from his birth to his grave, without magnifying his excellences or extenuating his failings. As regards Luther's opinions, it is hardly necessary to say, that a mere biographer can be in no way responsible for them: the only duty incumbent upon him in treading the perilous ground of contested doctrine, is to state with truth and accuracy what the subject of his biography really said, thought, and believed.

The second volume, which will conclude the Life of Luther, will make its appearance—unless unforeseen events preclude—at no distant interval of time. And, should the work afford any satisfaction to the public, it is intended that Luther's Life should form the first in a series of Biographies, having for their object to illustrate the history of the Reformation by sketches of the public and private careers of the most remarkable of those who, in different countries, were the chief instruments in the Divine work.

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THE LIFE

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INTRODUCTION.

The Reformers who rose up at different periods in the history of the Church may be divided into three classes: 1. The assertors of the right of private judgment against spiritual despotism; 2. The impugners of clerical excesses and ecclesiastical abuses; 3. The revivers of true doctrine in opposition to the false tenets of the infallible Church. This last denomination must be allowed to constitute the most solid claim to the name of Reformer; but, in giving a brief glance at the Reformers, whether individuals or reforming communities, who preceded Luther, some members of the two former sections must not be overlooked.

In the third century the Novatians objected to the readmission into the bosom of the Church of those who had fallen from the faith in the persecution of Decius. They bore the appellation of the Cathari, or the pure, on account of their rigid opinions, and were excommunicated by the Bishop of Rome: but whatever judgment may be passed on their peculiar sentiments, their attempt to reform the manners of professing Christians is at least the earliest on record.

In the following century, Ærius, in the eastern provinces of Asia Minor, inveighed against the arrogance of the Bishops in assuming that they constituted a distinct order from the presbyters; condemned prayers for the dead, periodical fasts, and the multitude of ceremonies which were already deforming the simplicity of primitive worship: but the taint of Arianism caused him to be regarded as a heretic, and threw suspicion on the most commendable of his doctrines.

In the same age, Jovinian, a monk of Milan, raised his protest against asceticism, denying any disparity of rewards in a future world; he denounced self-imposed austerities, and maintained that celibacy is in no respect more pleasing to God than matrimony. He was declared a heretic by Syricius Bishop of Rome, and Ambrose Bishop of Milan, and condemned by the latter in a council convened at Milan in 390. And application being made to the Emperor Honorius, Jovinian was banished from Italy to the desolate island of Boa, off the coast of Illyria.

In the next century, a Reformer arose of more vigorous mind, and more powerful eloquence, Vigilantius, a native of Convenæ or Lyons, among the eastern roots of the Pyrenees, who performed the functions of Presbyter at Barcelona, in Spain. He had travelled to Egypt and Palestine, and witnessed the system of monasticism as there carried to its height, and had returned filled with a just disgust of the inflated pietism which he perceived to be the genuine growth of self-mortification pursued as a holy discipline. He set himself in earnest to the task of exposing the false notions on which such superstitious practice rested. He assailed with boldness the idea that the relics of martyrs, or the spots where they have been entombed, enjoy any peculiar sanctity: he condemned burning tapers at their sepulchres as Pagan in

origin: he derided pilgrimages, periodical fastings, the pretensions of celibacy as a more holy state of life, prayers to departed saints, lying legends of miracles, and the preposterous doctrine that almsgiving can atone for sin. But the reign of darkness had already so far deepened on the Christian world, that it was not necessary for a council to be summoned to extinguish the influence of such scriptural teaching. The monk of Bethlehem, in his declamatory style of rabid abuse, pronounced Vigilantius a heretic; and this was enough to compel the victim of such denunciation to seek refuge from persecution in those sequestered valleys running down from the eastern declivities of the Cottian Alps, which were destined to prove the fastnesses of Christ's true Church in the outpouring of moral and doctrinal corruptions over the rest of Christendom.

But Augustine Bishop of Hippo, a convert from Manichæism through the excellent example of his mother Monica and the preaching of Ambrose, is the greatest name of this period. He taught salvation by grace alone, as none had taught it since St. Paul; and he may with justice be esteemed the spiritual father of Luther and the Reformation. He was raised up in God's providence to be a witness to the truth before the grossest doctrinal corruptions had taken firm root, as Luther was raised up when the papal church was overshadowed with their fullest growth. In the intervening thousand years, whatever true Christianity subsisted within the Roman pale is due to the Scriptures or to Augustine their best expositor. And it would be as impossible for Rome to reconcile the decrees of the Council of Trent with the writings of Augustine, whose authority she professes to recognize, as with those of Luther himself.

Towards the beginning of the ninth century a man of apostolical piety is found in those very valleys which had

sheltered the last days of Vigilantius, whose light shone so brightly as to be reflected in the Christianity of Piedmont long after his decease. Claude was by birth a Spaniard, and from being chaplain to Lewis the Meek was promoted to the episcopal office, and commenced his duties as Bishop of Turin in 823. It was the era in which the contest about images was raging with great virulence; and Claude went beyond the French divines and the Iconoclast Emperors of Constantinople in his resistance to image worship, removing from the churches throughout his diocese not only images but the crucifix and every material of superstition. Image worship he accounted idolatry: "My adversaries," said he, "have not abandoned idols, but have only changed their names." He also discouraged the veneration for relics, pilgrimages, the doctrines of the merits of saints and their intercession; he denied that the power of the priesthood to bind and loose extends beyond this world, and asserted, in reference to the Pontiff, that "he is not to be called Apostolic who merely occupies the Apostle's seat, but he who fulfils the functions of the Apostle." He diligently studied the Scriptures, and wrote commentaries on several of the sacred books, and doubtless derived the purity of his doctrine from the source of inspiration. There was a practical tendency in all his teaching. "If," he declared, "a man does not himself persevere in the faith, the righteousness, and the truth, in which the Apostles persevered, he cannot be saved." But Claude does not stand alone at this epoch as a witness for the Gospel. Agobard Archbishop of Lyons, as is proved by his writings, shared the scriptural faith of the Apostle of Piedmont; so did Paulinus Bishop of Aquileia; and many others of less note preserved in their own hearts and for their flocks the flame of pure religion.

The name of an independent enquirer in the same century

must not be altogether omitted. Godeshalcus, a German by birth, a monk of Orbais in the diocese of Soissons, broached the doctrine of a twofold predestination, of the elect to everlasting life and of the wicked to everlasting damnation. He defended his opinion by the authority of Augustine: but he was condemned by Rabanus Maurus, the most famous theologian of the day, in a council held at Mayence in 848, and he was subsequently severely handled by his own Diocesan the celebrated Hincmar. Having been subjected to torture of protracted duration he was next removed to a convent, where he was kept in confinement for twenty years, but without any effect upon his faith, for he died protesting the truth of the tenet for which he had suffered.

In the next century the darkness of ignorance would seem to have settled down with impenetrable gloom on the human intellect, and to have reached its extreme verge: but in the eleventh century another enquiring mind appears. Berenger Archdeacon of Angers, and principal of the public school of Tours, impugned the doctrine of transubstantiation, which Paschasius Radbert had introduced into the Church about a century and a half before, and maintained the real presence in the Lord's Supper to be simply spiritual. He was condemned in a council held at Rome in 1050: and also in two councils summoned in France. In a council convened at Tours in 1055, when Hildebrand was the legate of Pope Victor II., he was dismissed on signing a statement to the effect that he believed in the real presence. Four or five years later, in a council held at Rome, Berenger affixed his signature to a document affirming transubstantiation in the broadest terms. In 1078, in another council under the pontificate of his friend Gregory VII., he was suffered to escape by a profession of faith such as he had before made at Tours; but as this did not satisfy the more bigoted ecclesiastics, in a

second council at Rome under the same Pontiff, he declared his adhesion to transubstantiation to the fullest extent in explicit terms. But he continued to inculcate the same doctrine of only a spiritual presence as before; and died in 1088 overwhelmed with the most bitter remorse of conscience in that he should ever have denied by mouth a doctrine rooted in his heart. With brilliant talents and extensive learning he possesses excellent claims to the genius of independent thought; but his faith was too feeble for the patient endurance of a martyr.

The partial revival of letters in the eleventh century was continued with increasing success in the twelfth. Universities arose, in which learned men lectured; and the contentions about the nature of universals, which occupied the subtle and ingenious, could not be pursued without expanding the realm of thought, and questions in theology following in the train of questions in philosophy. Abelard, Canon of Paris, founder of the Paraclete, monk and abbot of Ruys, and finally an inmate in the monastery of Clugny, is an instance of this. He transferred his freedom of thought and subtlety of acumen from disputations on matters of logic to religious topics, roused against himself the hatred of the intolerant, and particularly of St. Bernard, and, in the close of his career, was glad of any shelter from persecution. His teaching and writings, however, had the effect of exciting enquiry, and stimulating others to resist the papal oppression. His disciple, Arnold, of Brescia, united the reformer with the patriot, insisted on the distinction between civil and spiritual, and called on the Pontiff to lay down his temporal dignity, and on the clergy to return to the old simplicity and virtue of their profession. Somewhat earlier, Peter de Bruys, the founder of the sect of Petrobrussians, had laboured to overthrow the dominant superstition in Languedoc and Dauphiny.

He destroyed the crucifix wherever he went, he denied transubstantiation, and ridiculed the notion of the condition of the dead being affected by prayers or oblations; but he carried his zeal beyond the limits of orthodoxy, and repudiated infant baptism and structures for divine worship. Another reformer, Henry, the founder of the Henricians, an Italian by birth and a hermit, travelling from Lausanne in Switzerland to Mans, and, on his being banished thence, to Poictiers, Bordeaux, and Toulouse, with a tall cross in his hand, attracted a concourse of peasants in the villages and towns he passed through, to whom he dilated on the avarice and vices of the clergy, and censured the festivals and ceremonies, multiplied by the Church for the sake of lucre. Each of these three last-mentioned Reformers fell a victim to persecution. Arnold, condemned by a Lateran Council in 1139, retired to Zurich, where he broke up the ground for the seed of the Gospel, to be sown with effect four centuries later by Zwingle; but, returning to Rome, was crucified there in 1155. Peter de Bruys was burnt at St. Giles' in 1130. Henry, overpowered by the antagonism of St. Bernard, ended his days in prison.

A Reformer, whose character and peculiar tenets are better known to history, flourished towards the close of the same century. Peter Waldus, or Waldo, was a native of Lyons, and, whilst still a Romanist, was so eager for the diffusion of Christianity amongst the people, that he had the four Gospels and other parts of the sacred writings translated into the vulgar tongue; and, through the study of his own versions of Scripture, was converted to the truth, and enabled to see the hostility of Popery to the Bible. His profession was that of a merchant, and he had acquired considerable property; but he relinquished the pursuit of merchandise, dispersed his goods in charity, and consecrated his time and energies to the revival of pure religion. The sanctity of his behaviour and the earnestness of his preach-

ing at first won him many converts in his native place; but, after a time, he incurred the displeasure of the archbishop, and found a retreat from persecution in the valleys of Piedmont, amongst Christians of congenial habits and doctrine, who had transmitted unimpaired, father to son, from age to age, the scriptural faith of their apostle, Claude of Turin.

It is just at this period in church history that distinct communities of Christians, acknowledging a faith at variance with Romanism and based on Scripture, came more under notice. These Waldenses, or Vallenses—that is, inhabitants of mountain valleys—or Vaudois, as they are variously called, were in possession of a territory adapted by nature to be the seed-plot of the Gospel for the rest of Europe. Continually subjected to persecution, they found a safeguard against annihilation in the natural obstacles which environed their Alpine recesses; and persecution so far aided the cause of the Gospel that it quickened the tendencies commonly felt by the inhabitants of a poor and mountainous district to migrate to more favoured countries, where industry may reap a surer reward of toil. Thus emigrants from the Vaudois expired at the stake in Cologne for their religious steadfastness in 1140; at the commencement of the thirteenth century, the number of Vaudois in Germany provoked a persecution from Frederic II.; a hundred and fourteen Vaudois were burnt at Paris in 1304; there was a numerous colony of them in Treves with regular schools and recognised teachers, between 1330 and 1390; the Turlupins, or companions of the wolves in Flanders, were Vaudois, or converts to the doctrines which the exiled Protestants of the Alps everywhere carried with them: and in 1370 a Vaudois colony was planted in Calabria. The original district over which Waldensian doctrine circulated extended on either side of the Alps, penetrating the fastnesses of the Pyrenees, to the west, and traversing the plains of

Lombardy to the east; and hence they are sometimes called the poor men of Lyons, and sometimes the poor men of Lombardy, although this distinction appears to be more than local, since the former, it is stated, entertained communist notions on the subject of property which were not found among the latter. In their own valleys, or in the countries to which they wandered, they retained a fast rooted antipathy to Popery. The Pope they termed Antichrist and his prelates Simonists: and the ancient verse record of their faith in the language of the Troubadours, La Nobla Leczyon, composed in 1099, is a conclusive demonstration of the scriptural excellence of the articles of their creed at that early date. If credit is due to their own historians, the Vaudois, as a religious society, are earlier than the time of Claude, and separated from the Latin Church at the era when, by the conversion of Constantine, wealth, as poison, flowed into its bosom, introducing luxury among its members, vitiating the primitive purity of the Christian life, and, by rapid consequence, perverting the principles of the faith "once delivered unto the the saints."

But the most important emigration from this "persecuted but not forsaken" remnant of the Apostolic Church remains to be spoken of. In 1176 a colony of Waldenses migrated to Bohemia, and formed a settlement on the river Eger; and in this new land they discovered, according to Moravian writers, a community of Christians attached to the Greek ritual, who had been struggling for upwards of two centuries against the papal prescription. They coalesced with such congenial minds, and formed an united religious body. The metropolis, as it were, of these confederate Christians, continued to be in Piedmont, whither such as were intended for the ministry were despatched to pursue their studies, and to be trained for their spiritual labours. The zeal of the frater-

nity was active and influential; their missions embraced Hungary, Brandenburg, Pomerania, England, and yet more distant countries; and in lapse of time their teaching was not without its effect on some of the priests of the Roman communion in their neighbourhood.

Thus a principal stream which irrigated with life some parts of the barren solitude of the Western Church, sprang from the Cottian Alps. In the eastern division of the great Roman Empire a kindred stream may be traced in very early times, less pure in its origin, but filtered and purified in its course, the windings of which were very tortuous, its tributaries widely dispersed, until it would seem to mingle with different branches from the chief current of European Protestantism. The Paulicians were to be found among the villages and mountains bordering on the Euphrates in the seventh century, a proscribed religious sect; stigmatised by the Greek Church as tainted with Gnostic or Manichæan heresy. But one of their members, Constantine, who afterwards took the name of Sylvanus, received from a stranger, a deacon, to whom he had given lodging in his return from Syrian captivity, as a token of gratitude for his hospitable treatment, a copy of the New Testament. Constantine read it with careful study, and communicated its contents to his Armenian fellow exiles, to whom it imparted a new and correct view of the doctrines of the Gospel, and by whom it was ever afterwards appealed to as the only standard of Christian truth, as well as employed as the chief means of propagating their own sentiments. Hence the name of the community, *Paulicians*, as those who embraced with especial ardour the doctrines insisted on by the Apostle Paul in his epistles. They endured continued persecution from the Greek Church and Emperor. Under Theodora a strict inquisition was made for them throughout Lesser Asia, and as many as a hundred

thousand, according to the boast of the orthodox, were put to death by the order of that Empress. But these severities produced retaliation; and the Paulicians used the sword for some time with considerable success, but lost in the profession of arms much of the Christian character which had previously distinguished them. In the eighth century they are found in Thrace in close friendship with other Armenians differing from them in faith. In the thirteenth century history records their appearance in Croatia, Dalmatia, Italy, and France, still in their varied adventures and trials retaining something of their ancient faith, and equally distinct from the Greek Church and the Latin.

The Paulicians appeared in the largest numbers at the beginning of the thirteenth century in the south of France, to which the access was easy from Thrace, Constantinople, and Italy; and there combining with members of the Vaudois Church and some remnants of the Petrobrussians and Henricians, they formed the Albigenses, so named, as some suppose, from the town of Albigia or Albi; or, as others conjecture, from the term Albigensium, by which the south of France was designated in the middle ages. The Albigenses went commonly by the name of Paulicians, or Publicans, the latter probably a corruption of the former; Bulgarians, Paterini, from a certain place called Pataria, Cathari or Gazari (*i.e.* Puritans), and Boni Homines. The descriptions of them have come down exclusively from their adversaries, and are therefore instructive chiefly by implication; and it does not appear that they were like the Flagellants, the Dancers, the Bianchi of Italy, and other sects of the period, mere fanatics; but on the contrary, from the favour of the Counts of Toulouse, under whom they lived, that they were eminent for the pacific virtues of settled industry. It was not long, however, before the hue and cry of heresy was raised, and Innocent III. sent

his emissaries, amongst them Dominic, the founder of the Dominicans, charged with the work of extirpation. The papal functionaries bore the title of Inquisitors: the roving commission was soon altered to a standing local tribunal; the simple forms of judicial enquiry yielded their place to the most refined subtleties; and from the crucible of bigotry and intolerance finally came forth the tribunal of the Inquisition. The secular arm was further called to the aid of the spiritual; and Simon de Montford, one half a selfish politician, and the other half a relentless fanatic, omitted no article of sanguinary cruelty in obeying the behests of the Church. So complete was the extermination, that in the middle of the thirteenth century it would have been a task of difficulty to find an Albigensian.

The destruction of the Albigenses was a signal triumph for Rome, and a disheartening retrospect to the narrow band of Reformers on the summit of the Alps; so much so, that, either from the zeal of the opponents of the Papacy being calmed, or the vengeance of Rome slaked, the Waldenses had a lengthened respite from persecution. But the century which succeeded to this wholesale martyrdom was very dark, feebly illumined by a scattered name or two of Christian worth, such as that of Gross-teste Bishop of Lincoln, who refused to institute an Italian boy to a benefice at the Pope's bidding, and is reported on his deathbed to have pronounced the Pope to be Antichrist. The demand from without for a Church Reformation had been quenched in the blood of hundreds of thousands: but the demand was in itself so well grounded, that an attempt for a revival was made from within, and the four orders of friars rose upon the ruined reputation of the monks, bound to a holy life by the additional obligation of poverty. But from the bosom of this new papistical institution, framed to consolidate the power of Rome, and generally

truly subservient to that purpose, there proceeded devout and humble minds, who, from their earnestness in religion, were soon placed in antagonism to Rome. To many of the Franciscan order the regulation of their founder imposing absolute poverty appeared needlessly severe: and application was made to the Pontiff, not without effect, to relax its stringency. But another party of the Franciscans were resolved to adhere, in opposition both to the Pope and their brother friars, to the plain literal construction of their founder's will. One section of these dissentients remained in outward union with the Franciscan body, and were only distinguished from the rest by the appellation of Spirituals. The Fratricelli, however, went farther; and separating themselves from the degenerate Franciscans altogether, formed establishments of their own, repudiating not merely any right of property in possessions, but even the use, and consistently with this principle, supporting themselves by alms begged from door to door. In addition to these, there were the Tertiaries, a secular fraternity who followed the third rule of St. Francis, which imposed the same rigid obligation on them as on the regulars of their order, with the exception of the vow of celibacy. All these three classes of dissentients emanating from the Franciscan community, believed for the most part in a book entitled, "The Everlasting Gospel," commonly ascribed to the famous Abbot Joachim, the chief subject of the revelations of which referred to the coming Reformation of the Church. An explanatory introduction was prefixed to this work by Gerhard, one of the Spirituals, in which the definite assertion was advanced, that the anticipated Reformation would be brought about by the preaching of humble and barefooted friars, destitute of every worldly possession. In the contest between the Pope and the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, many of the Franciscan Spirituals took refuge with the latter; and among them the celebrated

William Occam, a native of a village of the same name in Surrey, who did not refrain from venting his antipathy to the Papacy in the keenest satire. There were, moreover, in Flanders, many societies both of men and women, resembling in their organization the Tertiaries of St. Francis, who appropriated to themselves an appellation derived from the Canticles, of the "Vineyard of the Lord." And many of these societies of lay brethren and sisters, called Cellites, from living in cells, and Alexians, from their patron saint Alexius, bestowed much attention, about the beginning of the fourteenth century, on visiting the sick, particularly such as were afflicted with the plague, whom the clergy were afraid to approach; and they were accustomed to lay in the graves the corpses of such as had died of pestilence, accompanying their charitable act with muttering a low funeral dirge. Hence the term Lollard, or singer, which became co-extensive with Beghard,* the proper appellation of the Franciscan Tertiaries; and the English Beghards were more generally styled Lollards. There may have been much of error as well as of truth mixed up in the notions of these religionists; and the records of them transmitted by the pens of opponents charge them with many heresies; but the devotedness of life shown by at least numerous members of their societies argue a sincere desire to know and do the truth, which God does not often leave unenlightened or in fatal error; and the assiduity with which the Dominicans fed the fires of the Inquisition with such inoffensive victims, is another testimony to their worth.

What was the tendency of the opinions entertained on religion by the Lollards or Beghards, as all those were called who professed more than ordinary sanctity, (just as the term Methodist has been applied in later times,) is best evidenced by

* Beghard denoted prayerful, devout, and also subsisting by begging alms.

the life and tenets of a Reformer, greater than any of his predecessors, who earned the title of the "Apostle of the Lollards." John de Wycliffe was born in the north of England, in the village of Wycliffe, in Yorkshire, and of an ancient family, in 1324; and first brought himself into notice by a tract, entitled "Able Beggary," directed against the mendicant friars, the devoted and most active abettors of the papal pretensions. In 1361, Wycliffe was presented to the living of Fillingham, in Lincolnshire; and, later in the same year, was advanced to the wardenship of Baliol College. In 1365 he was made Master of Canterbury Hall, which, as Fuller says, has "since like a tributary brook, been swallowed up in the vastness of Christ Church."* But the death of his patron, Simon de Islep Archbishop of Canterbury, taking place not many months afterwards, Peter Langham—who had been a monk himself, and therefore espoused the monastic and mendicant cause in opposition to the universities and secular clergy—was elevated to the primacy, and removed Wycliffe from his mastership, in which he reinstated Woodhall, the previous master, whom Simon de Islep had degraded for his contentions and refractory spirit. Against this act of the new Primate Wycliffe appealed to the Pope; but he did not on that account in any measure recede from the bold defence of the universities and clergy against the monks and friars, in which he was embarked. Indeed, while the cause was pending, the refusal of Edward III. to pay to the Pontiff the tribute which John had agreed to pay annually to the Holy See, in recognition of feudal submission, was defended by Wycliffe against a monk who had written a tract on the pontifical side, and challenged the Reformer to answer him. But this high-spirited conduct determined the verdict of Urban V. Wycliffe, however, was com-

* Church History of Britain, I., p. 439.

pensated for the deprivation of his mastership of Canterbury Hall by being raised by the University of Oxford to the chair of Professor of Theology. An enlarged sphere of usefulness was thus opened to him, in which he laboured with great energy, enlightening the age by his writings and lectures. It is not exactly known by what means Wycliffe had obtained the patronage of John of Gaunt, but probably by his defence of the King against the Pope, which had also led to his being appointed a royal chaplain; and the joint efforts of the duke and the chaplain were directed to the laudable object of separating the spiritual and the temporal, and confining the attention of ecclesiastics to the charge of their own flocks. In 1374, Wycliffe was chosen one of the delegates to treat with the papal commissioners on restraining within certain bounds the patronage of the Pontiff; for the statutes against provisors, and other efforts of the king and parliament, had proved insufficient to prevent or effectually abate the evil. The negociations were carried on at Bruges. Had Avignon itself been the theatre of the discussions, the display of papal sensuality and iniquity would have been more complete; but the Reformer saw enough in the dealings of the commissioners to conceive a more rooted hostility to Rome than before; and ever afterwards he denounced the Pope as unequivocally "the Antichrist." He was not forgotten by the king in his absence, but was presented first to the prebend of Aust, in the collegiate church of Westbury, in the diocese of Worcester, and soon afterwards to the rectory of Lutterworth, in Lincolnshire. It appears that he did not return to England until 1376; and, in the meantime, William of Wykeham, Courtney, and the party of the prelates, had contrived so far to excite the resentment of the public against John of Gaunt, that an attack upon Wycliffe was deemed practicable. In the commencement of 1377 he was summoned on the charge of

erroneous and heretical opinions to appear before his ecclesiastical superiors in St. Paul's, and the 19th February was fixed for his defence. He entered the place of trial accompanied by Lord Percy the Earl Marshal, and by John of Gaunt, whose protection was regarded by the prelates as intrusive; and, in the altercation which ensued, Percy insisted that Wycliffe should be seated before his judges, and the Duke used language to the effect that he would humble the pride of the whole prelacy of England. The Londoners, according to Walsingham, were all Lollards; but the faction of the bishops, taking advantage of the unpopularity of John of Gaunt, was able to excite a tumult, which proceeded to acts of violence and bloodshed; and thus the affair of Wycliffe's trial terminated for the present. But, in the July following, bulls were received from the Pope, by which Wycliffe was pronounced a heretic of a similar grade to John of Ghent (John de Ganduno) and Marcillus of Padua;* and he was summoned by the Chancellor of the University of Oxford, but not without some reluctance, to answer to the charges made against him before his superiors, in the chapel of Lambeth. But on this occasion, no political feelings intervening to turn aside the bias of public sentiment on religion, the populace with a menacing air surrounded the chapel. Sir Louis Clifford, in the name of the Queen Mother, forbade the proceedings; and the bishops, in no little alarm, desisted from their attempt. The Grand Schism which followed, in 1379, allowed the Reformer a respite from persecution, and enabled him to undertake and accomplish his most important work—of translating, by the aid of expository comments, not only the New Testament but the whole Bible, from the Vulgate into English; and, at the same time, added to the vigour with

* They placed the civil above the ecclesiastical authority.

which he composed and published popular religious tracts, drawing attention to the goodness of Christ, "who hath begun already to help us graciously, in that he hath clove the head of Antichrist." But these labours brought on a severe sickness, in which, stretched upon his bed at Oxford, he was visited by representatives of the orders of friars and some city aldermen, who admonished him to think of his approaching end, and repent of his ways; upon which Wycliffe, having been bolstered up in bed by his attendants, exclaimed, "I shall not die, but live, and shall again declare the evil deeds of the friars." This prediction proved true; and he was enabled not only to resume his sermons and lectures, but his itinerant instruction to the scattered peasantry, amongst whom his venerable appearance in his plain garb and long frieze gown, and simple but powerful style of eloquence, gained him great influence; and such as he could not visit himself, he found means of enlightening in the principles of the Gospel by the agency of his "poor priests," who preached in churches, markets, fairs, and wherever they could find an auditory. In the spring of 1381 he gave great prominence in his university lectures to his denial of the doctrine of transubstantiation, asserting that the sacramental elements are "not Christ nor any part of him, but an effectual sign of him." This attack on the centre point of the Romish system aroused the full enmity of his opponents. His teaching was first prohibited by the authorities of his university, from whom he appealed to the civil power, employing himself in the interval before the meeting of Parliament in composing the treatise known as "Wycliffe's Wicket," in which he arraigned the monstrous absurdity of pretending that "the thing which is not God to-day shall be God to-morrow; yea, that the thing which is without spirit of life, but groweth in the field by nature, shall another time be God!" Just at this period,

by the death of Simon Sudbury, the bigoted Courtney was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury; and in May, 1382, a few days before the Parliament met, convoked a synod famous as the Council of the "herydene," or earthquake, by which its proceedings were for a moment interrupted, which condemned twenty-four articles extracted from Wycliffe's writings, ten as heresies, and the rest as errors. The crown and the mitre were for a while united in sentiment at this juncture, and a bill passed the Lords, but not the Commons, and received the royal sanction, which is the first Act to be found among the English statutes for the suppression of heresy. Even John of Gaunt, the patron of Chaucer, and up to this time of Wycliffe, who had strained every nerve to confine within narrower limits the domination of Rome, drew back from alliance with a man who had dared to assail a principal dogma of the faith. But before persecution could wreak its vengeance on his head, Wycliffe was mercifully released from his trials and his labours, which had never been checked by the resistance opposed to them. As he was raising the chalice in solemnization of the Lord's Supper, in his church of Lutterworth, he was struck by paralysis, and expired on the last day of the year 1384; his enemies imputing his death to the divine judgment, and his friends regarding it as a special mark of divine love, that the death stroke fell when he was in the act of performing the highest function of the Christian minister.

None of the preceding Reformers had attained in any measure to Wycliffe's celebrity: and his opinions were so singularly enlightened that, if not in the words which he employed to communicate them, yet in the reality of his meaning, they fell but little short of the sum of Christian truth. He insisted strongly in his teaching on Augustine's great points, the depravity of man, and the grace through Christ;

he bowed submissively before no authority save that of Scripture: he rejected transubstantiation, monasticism, and the whole religion of ceremonial: he characterised pardons and indulgences as "a subtle merchandise of antichristian clerks, causing men to wallow in sin like hogs:" he repudiated auricular confession; asserted the simply ministerial character of priestly absolution; disdained excommunications and interdicts; and maintained that bishops and priests belonged originally to the same order. He did indeed retain the seven sacraments, but understood the term in a very lax sense, as appears from his observation, that "the baptism of water profiteth not without the baptism of the Spirit." It must be imputed to the austere and melancholy views, which the evils of the times forced upon him, that he spoke of music in divine worship as unsuitable "in this valley of tears;" to the vices of the clergy, that he regarded tithes merely as alms; and to the worldly pride of the prelates, that he could see little else in confirmation than means of episcopal aggrandisement. He objected to oaths on whatever occasion as profane; and warmly advocated peace. Of the Pope he spoke as that "evil manslayer, poisoner, and burner of the servants of Christ, the root of all the misgovernance in the Church:" and he subjected the property and conduct of ecclesiastics to the award of civil tribunals; and looked to the State as in right and duty bound to reform the Church. His opinions on many subjects were much like guesses after truth; and he may be viewed as occupying something of the same position in relation to subsequent Reformers which Roger Bacon occupied in reference to the philosophers of a more favoured era: and, according to human judgment, it sufficiently explains his failure to accomplish the object of his labours and of his life, that his genius and knowledge shot so far beyond the confined notions and servile principles of his age.

As has already been shown, side by side with the true Church of Christ protesting against Rome, attempts were continually making from within the papal fold, not to reform the doctrines, but to reform the corrupt morality which was jeopardizing doctrines and the worldly interests of which the doctrines were the palladium. Had Wycliffe inveighed as exclusively as he did severely against the manners of the times, and particularly of the ecclesiastical order, he would have been the precursor of such men as Peter D'Ailli, Clemangis, and John Gerson, and would have ended his career in the favour of the powerful and the repute of the world. Gerson, the oracle of the Councils of Pisa and Constance, denounced in an equally bold tone the laxity of ecclesiastical morals and the infamy of the Pontiffs; but he placed the decisions of Councils in the stead of Scripture, the Church, as he termed the Latin Apostacy, in that of Christ; and whilst in one sentence he vigorously called for a Reformation of the Church, in the next he consigned those true Reformers, who had probed the evil deeper than himself, to the dungeon or the stake.

But it has been beautifully said of the remains of Wycliffe, which, by a decree of the Council of Constance, were exhumed from their resting-place more than forty years after interment, and thrown into the adjoining brook:—"The brook did convey his ashes into Avon: Avon into Severn: Severn into the narrow seas: they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrines, which now are dispersed all the world over." The transit of Wycliffe's tenets and writings to Bohemia was facilitated by the return of the ladies of the court of the good Queen of the ill-fated Richard II., Anne of Bohemia, after her demise, to their native land: and the communication was kept open by Bohemian noblemen resorting to Oxford, where the disciples

of the Reformer were still numerous, and by Oxford students travelling to Bohemia. The influence which a great man always exerts was exemplified most powerfully in the history of an eminent Reformer and Martyr, a pupil of Wycliffe by the study of his writings, who next rose up in this very country, watered of old and prepared to receive with fruitful energy the seed wafted from England.

John Hussinitz or Huss, so called from the rural village of his birth, was remarkable for a pale thoughtful face, an attenuated form, and a gentleness and affability of address which scarcely less than his eloquence gained him the good will of all ranks. In 1400 he was appointed confessor to Sophia of Bavaria, the Queen of Bohemia: a year later he became President or Dean of the philosophical faculty in the University of Prague: in 1409 he was raised to be Rector of that University: but for some years previously his sermons in the chapel of Bethlehem, delivered in the language of his countrymen, had begun to attract great attention. In these sermons he solemnly declared that the doctrines of Wycliffe were the sum of truth, and expressed his devout wish that on quitting this life his soul might pass to the same region as that in which the soul of Wycliffe had its dwelling-place. The clergy of Bohemia at first had not shown themselves unfavourable to Huss, but as his character expanded, and his doctrinal system developed, they conceived a stronger and stronger dislike to him, and combining as against a heretic accused him to John XXIII., by whom he was summoned to stand his trial at Rome. The papal mandate was disregarded and contemned. The case was next taken up by the Council of Constance, which among its earliest acts ordered John Huss to appear before it; and a safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigismund seemed to preclude the idea of danger to his person. Huss, who set a very different value on the authority of the Pontiff

and that of a General Council, obeyed the requisition of the latter with alacrity, and, confident in the justice of his cause, addressed letters to his opponents, challenging them to meet him face to face at Constance. But within a month after his arrival he was thrown into prison: on the 14th May, 1415, the writings and the bones of Wycliffe were condemned to the flames: and it shortly afterwards was made apparent that Sigismund's safe-conduct would only prevail so far as to procure Huss the mockery of a trial. From the Council Huss appealed to Jesus Christ; but this they declared was in derision of ecclesiastical authority; and they registered their decision that a promise given to a heretic is not binding. The process of deprivation of the priestly office was formally carried through. Huss was dressed in his full canonical robes with the communion cup in his hands: the cup was first taken out of his hands; then his robes were stripped off him: a cap with "heresiarch" inscribed on it in large letters was put on his head: after which his sentence was read, and his soul consigned to the infernal devils, and he was finally led away to the stake. His last words were, "Lord Jesus, I endure with humility this cruel death for thy sake: and I pray thee to pardon all my enemies." His ashes were thrown into the Lake of Constance.

But another victim was required to satiate the orthodox vengeance of a Council convened on the business of Reform. Jerome, the disciple of Huss, Master in Theology and Lecturer in the University of Prague, was accused of entertaining the same theological principles as his Rector, and cited to Constance to answer to the accusation. His first appearance before the Council was on the 23rd May, when his constancy stood proof against every demand of retractation. On June 14, it was decided that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be administered in one kind only, in opposition to the Bohemian

practice: and in the beginning of July Huss suffered martyrdom. These acts of the Council daunted the courage of Jerome: and on his second appearance he wavered in his replies; and on the third formally recanted, anathematizing all heresies and especially those of Wycliffe and Huss. But he was nevertheless reconsigned to prison; and Gerson published a tract intended to cast suspicion on the revocation of their tenets by heretics. Meanwhile better feelings were re-awakened in Jerome's breast. He earnestly and repeatedly solicited to be taken once more before the Council, and on this request being complied with, on the 23rd May 1416 he revoked his former guilty recantation, and openly declared that it had been wrung from him against his convictions by the apprehension of a painful death. Seven days afterwards he suffered on the same spot on which Huss had sealed his testimony with his blood. But as if to evince his shame at the weakness of his earlier conduct, he ordered the executioner to kindle the fire not behind his back but full before his face, and as the flames ascended he imitated Huss in chaunting a hymn with devout joy until the power of speech failed him.

The followers of Huss, incensed at the barbarous murder of their spiritual father in the teeth of the imperial safe-conduct, retired to a high mountain, to which they gave the name of Thabor, whence they themselves obtained the designation of Thaborites. They celebrated the holy communion in both kinds in the most solemn manner; and took up arms in defence of their faith, first under Nicholas de Hussinet, afterwards of the famous John Ziska, and on his decease, of Procopius Rasa. For some time their warlike operations were signally successful, but at length their unhappy division into two parties, the Calixtines, who expressed themselves satisfied with retaining the use of the cup in the eucharist, and the Thaborites more strictly so called, who extended their views to a General

Reform, sowed the seeds of disaster and finally of defeat. In 1433 the Council of Basle condescended to negociate with heretics who had proved their skill in the use of the sword. In 1436 a concordat was arranged between them and the Emperor Sigismund; but the Pontiff would hear of no compromise, and refused to confirm the appointment of Rokysan a Calixtine to the See of Prague. In 1451 Æneas Sylvius, the liberal Cardinal, and afterwards as Pius II. the intolerant Pope, visited the Hussites, but with no effectual result. The hopes of union with the Greek Church which Rokysan and the Bohemians had formed were overthrown together with Constantinople itself in 1453; and in 1466 Paul II. excommunicated the Bohemian monarch, proclaimed a transfer of his sceptre to Corvinus the son of Hunniades, and diverted the arms levied against the Turks to the extirpation of heresy. But persecution and presumption failed of their object. Gradually, however, the resistance to Romish pretensions languished into indifference: even party denominations became lost: only a remnant survived whom the sword had not quelled and whose zeal for truth had not been extinguished by the more powerful agency of the surrounding indifference. Relieved of adherents never more than partially enlightened as to religious truth, this devoted remnant obtained a settlement in the Lordship of Lititz, a domain laid waste by war on the boundary of Silesia and Moravia; and here they remodelled their doctrines by the standard of Scripture, and established themselves in a Christian society, to which they gave the name of the United Bohemian or Moravian Brethren; and to mark their sympathy with the Christians in the Alpine valleys, their first bishop, Matthew, was ordained by the Waldensian Bishop Stephen. Congregations rapidly sprung up throughout Bohemia and Moravia in connexion with this "Unitas fratrum:" missions were formed: and the new colony grew to a thriving

religious community, the centre of light to their neighbourhood, and even the more distant parts of Germany. So much was this the case that their tenets engaged the attention of Leo X. in 1513, and he invited their delegates to bear a share in the deliberations of the fifth Lateran Council. And thus when Luther sounded the notes of evangelical truth a few years later, he drew to his banner amongst the foremost, Bohemian and Moravian Christians, who amidst doctrinal corruptions on all sides, had faithfully repudiated the mass, transubstantiation, purgatory, image worship, prayers for the dead, the authority of Councils, and the usurpation of the Pope.

It is now necessary to retrace the steps to England, and there behold a Reformer like Huss, animated with a firm faith in the doctrines of Wycliffe and the Scriptures, and, like the Bohemian prophet, adorned too with the crown of martyrdom. Sir John Oldcastle, or Lord Cobham, was one of the most popular noblemen in England, equally a favourite with Henry V. and with the people; but at a period when a newly established throne required clerical support, and therefore loose reins had been given to the prelates, he had distinguished himself by his ardour in opposing intolerance in his place in Parliament, and had, moreover, laboured to instruct the multitude by disseminating Wycliffe's writings, and employing the more gifted of his disciples as preachers. The prelates accused him of heresy to his sovereign, and in a private interview with Henry, Cobham was so bold, or so indiscreet, as to declare, "As sure as God's word is true, it is fully evident to me that the Pope is the great Antichrist foretold in Holy Writ." He was summoned to appear before the Archbishop, and disregarding the summons, was excommunicated. He now took alarm, and waited upon the king with a written statement of his opinions; but at this very

moment the summoner entered the apartment, and cited him to appear before the Archbishop. With the precipitancy of his temperament he exclaimed, "Since I have no other justice I appeal to the Court of Rome." Indignant at the affront, Henry commanded that he should be immediately conveyed to the Tower. In two successive trials which followed he behaved with the elevation of his character, declaiming against clerical avarice and vice, asserting the real presence in the eucharist, but not "materially," and maintaining that the Romish communion constituted no part of the Church of Christ. He was of course condemned as a heretic, but in the interval before the execution of the sentence effected his escape into Wales. At this point Henry V. seemed disposed to let the matter sink into oblivion, and leave Cobham in the obscurity of the Welsh valleys: but the clergy were actuated by the virulence of disappointed bloodhounds who had suffered the prey to escape from their teeth. They feigned a conspiracy of the Lollards, with Cobham at its head, against the royal authority, and so wrought on the king's irascible mood, as to induce him with a few armed attendants to set upon an assembly of Lollards congregated in St. Giles' Fields for prayer, or some harmless object, whose numbers sacerdotal artifice had swelled to twenty thousand. Twenty were killed, and sixty taken prisoners; but what was more to prelatical taste, a price was set on Cobham's head. For four years his vigilance baffled the arts of his pursuers; but at last, captured by the exertions of Lord Powis, he suffered the double punishment which a recent Act of Parliament attached to the crime with which he was charged: he was hung in chains, and, a fire being kindled under the gibbet, consumed to ashes. The severity of the law against heresy was again increased; but notwithstanding the sanguinary decrees of the king and his parliament, Lollardism

grew and multiplied, and England, as a nation, welcomed the Gospel more and more, which her rulers despised.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century the light was becoming more and more distinct in the horizon, harbingering the dawn. Heretofore the Reformers of note had been "few and far between;" now many appeared at one time, and almost every land could boast its own luminary. In 1479 John of Wesalia taught at Erfurth the futility of indulgences, of the holy chrism, pilgrimages, and fast days, and expatiated on the worthlessness of Pope, Bishops, and Clergy, as instruments of salvation. John Wesselus of Groningen, denominated "the light of the world," taught the same truths with greater force and genius; so much so, that his works were subsequently edited by Luther, who says of him, "He lived without blood and contention, and this is the only thing in which he differed from me." It is a characteristic trait, that when Wesselus was asked by his friend Pope Sixtus IV. what he should do for him, he requested the present of a Greek and a Hebrew Bible. Spain too possessed her Reformer in Peter Osma, of Salamanca: and France in John Laillier, Licentiate in Theology at Paris.

But the Italian Savonarola so far eclipsed all the other Reformers of the era immediately preceding Luther, that his actions, opinions, and fate deserve a more lengthened notice. Born at Ferrara in 1452, Jerome Savonarola entered a Dominican convent in 1475, and was early initiated into the doctrines of grace, as taught by Augustine, and derived from the Scriptures. His first attempts in pulpit eloquence were unsuccessful, in consequence of the tenuity of his voice, the effect of which was not diminished by a feeble bodily constitution and a stature rather below the ordinary. But with great pains he surmounted these physical difficulties; and subsequently the peculiarity of his appearance, a delicate

frame, lofty and deeply furrowed forehead, brilliant blue eyes, aquiline nose, and fingers so emaciated as, held before the light, to resemble transparency, are spoken of as adding to the influence, and giving a kind of ethereal charm to a rapid enunciation and the impassioned glow of eloquence, which was regarded by many, and by himself, as inspiration. Having been mentioned with high encomium by Pico della Mirandula to Lorenzo de Medici, he became Prior of the convent of San Marco, at Florence. The burden of his pulpit denunciations was the iniquity of the times, which must shortly call down divine vengeance: "The sword of the Lord upon the earth, soon and sudden." In August, 1489, he commenced an exposition of the Revelation of St. John, his favourite apostle, as the Apocalypse was his favourite book, in the convent garden, under a canopy of Damascus roses, to an immense audience, which numbered the gay and the recluse, the ignorant and the learned. But to the mystic and ascetic he added the character of the unyielding republican. Lorenzo de Medici admired his powers and his probity, and desired his familiarity and friendship; frequently he walked in the convent garden alone, having intimated his presence by a trusty messenger to the prior; but Savonarola persisted in avoiding his society. At last, upon his deathbed, Lorenzo sent for the Prior of San Marco. After the commendation of the sick man to the Divine clemency, and instilling religious consolation, Savonarola asked "if he had a strong and living faith?" "Yes," was Lorenzo's ready answer. "You must also," continued the monk, "part from all sin, repent, and restore whatever you have wrongfully taken, or you cannot be saved." Lorenzo promised so to do. "Wilt thou, then," urged the intrepid prior, "restore liberty to Florence?" The dying man shook his head, the demand was too great, and the negative being still returned to the repeated question, Savona-

rola abruptly left the palace without administering the last sacraments. When Charles VIII. of France invaded Italy, Savonarola appeared in his presence with his characteristic fortitude, and, in his capacity of prophet, assured the king that he had foretold his advent, and warned him to restrain the licentiousness of his soldiers, and to act as God's agent for the regeneration of the Church of Italy. Amid his own religious society his efforts as a Reformer had already been exerted with success; and two convents, that of San Marco at Florence and another at Fiesole, separated from the Lombard congregation, professed the rigid rule of St. Dominic. But on Charles VIII. quitting Florence, the monk came forward in the new character of civil legislator; and, although none had been a more staunch opponent of the Medici in their period of prosperity, one of his earliest endeavours was to repress every thought of vengeance, and procure a perfect amnesty. The image present to his aspirations was "Florence a spiritual city, a divine state, a Christian democracy," or rather a theocracy. The ancient Church, he was wont to tell his auditors, had a roof of gold, porticoes of the finest marble, and pavement of mosaic; but now the glory of the primitive building was displaced by a fabric of wood; the roof was fallen in, and all was ruin. The decay of the Church he attributed to "locking up the springs of Holy Scripture." The spirituality of life and of worship which he strove to revive, went so far as the rejection of music and other external adjuncts to devotion: and consistently with this principle he valued unuttered above vocal prayer. So powerful were his discourses, that his audience, after leaving the Church, would form a ring for the enjoyment of spiritual dances in the streets, a friar and a citizen hand-in-hand shouting, "Viva Christo." But a more conclusive proof of his oratorical effectiveness was, that a change of manners was every-

where observable; places of public amusement were closed; sensuality was excluded, and spirituality reigned in its stead; and Florence the gay had become Florence the sober. But how was this to last? The Pope instinctively dreaded Savonarola's influence, and had attempted to buy his alliance by the proffer of a cardinal's hat, which was of course refused, and that too in a thrilling cry from the pulpit. "The cardinal's hat to be set on my brow shall be the crown of martyrdom dyed in blood." But, when after a while the reaction came, and the waning popularity of the Prior of San Marco allowed the Pontiff to drop the mask, it was soon apparent that no mercy would be shown the heretic. Savonarola was cited to appear at Rome; the Tuscan convents were reincorporated with the Lombard congregation; and until he had been tried, the Reformer was interdicted from preaching, and was finally excommunicated. In return the pontifical authority was rejected; and an appeal for the reformation of the Church by a General Council was made to the Christian civil rulers, accompanied by the assurance that Alexander VI. is "no Pope nor even a Christian:" and the Pontiff himself admonished "no longer to delay thinking of his soul's salvation." Savonarola preached for the last time publicly on the 18th March, 1498, when he declared, "that he took refuge from the earthly Pope, from the hellish power of Satan, with the heavenly Pope, even Christ." The catastrophe was not long postponed. A Franciscan brother had decoyed Domenico di Pescia, a friend and disciple of Savonarola, into agreeing to subject their respective claims as to the truth of their doctrines to the decision of the ordeal by fire: and Savonarola, whose genius was not superior to superstition, and had even hinted at the proof of his tenets by miracle, was induced by the tendency of his own principles, and regard for his friend, but against the warnings of his better judg-

ment, to sanction this trial. The Franciscan, when all was arranged, declined to enter the fire with any but Savonarola himself. Another, however, was substituted in his place: and a pile of wood having been raised in the Piazza, the Prior of San Marco, bearing the host, and in his priestly attire, repaired to the spot at the head of a procession of his monks. A delay was occasioned by Domenico's insisting that he would carry the host with him through the flames, which the adverse party as stoutly resisted: and meanwhile torrents of rain fell, to which a more portentous significancy seemed to be given by thunderclaps and terrific lightning, and the pile was so drenched that to ignite it was no longer possible. The disappointment of the public curiosity completed the ruin of Savonarola: his convent was stormed amidst scenes of bloodshed; and he was compelled to deliver himself up to the officers sent by the Signory to apprehend him. He was examined by various modes of torture, some of which were excruciating in the extreme to his delicate and highly sensitive organization: but if he made any recantation under acute pain he recanted it on returning to his senses: and the case made out against him was after all a weak one. But Alexander VI. had vowed his destruction: "He shall die," he exclaimed, "were he John the Baptist himself!" Commissioners arrived from Rome: the mock formality of a second trial was gone through; and sentence of death was pronounced upon him with two of his associates. They were hanged in the Piazza, Savonarola in the midst: their bodies were then burnt, and their ashes were thrown into the Arno.

The resemblance of Savonarola's history to Luther's is stronger than to that of either Wycliffe or Huss. Like Luther he immured himself in a convent against his parents' consent; and like Luther, in the earlier part of his career, maintained the doctrines of Augustine and the sacred writings

whilst he remained in visible union with Rome. But Savonarola continued through life, what Luther was only for a time, a mystic and ascetic. The monk of Florence was, moreover, deemed inspired; a dove, it was affirmed, would frequently alight on his shoulder and whisper in his ear: his prophetical gift was revered; and in his reported personal conflicts with the powers of darkness, there is much that anticipates the private history of the monk of Wittenberg. In his doctrine Savonarola more nearly harmonises with Wycliffe, for he believed, like him, not merely in the invisibility of the true Church, and the incompatibility of the priestly character with the guilt of mortal sin, but disowned every external adjunct or stimulant as an infringement on the purity and spirituality of devotion. He was so far, in common with the Reformers of his age, inferior to Luther in enlightenment, that he fulminated his denunciations against the "Roman Babylon" more on account of its moral defection than its doctrinal corruption. But he has been recognised as a brother by Luther himself; and in his torrents of invective against the vices of the times, his stirring calls to repentance, his own ascetic rigour, and his pointing to a speedy ecclesiastical revival, he merits the name of the John the Baptist of the Reformation.

The time was now near at hand when the ashes of the martyrs, scattered to the winds and to the waves, were to prove the seeds of new and multiplied spiritual life. Under the obscure vault of night illusions cheat the senses, which the light of day dissipates: and the revival of letters, which had been progressively advancing, and had received a mighty impulse from the importation of Greek scholars and books into Europe from Constantinople, the rapid spread of intelligence by the discovery of the art of printing, the new and correct ideas in science which were just unfolding, all be-

tokened that superstition was losing its hold, and the religious emancipation of the mind could not be long deferred. Side by side with the Reformers, more strictly so called, must be placed the men who by their attainments, their writings, and their influence, cleared away prejudices, and were the appointed pioneers of the Reformation.

Of this class two individuals in particular attained to striking eminence, Reuchlin and Erasmus. The latter, small in stature, slight in figure, with observing blue eyes peering under their falling lids, overwhelmed with nervous timidity at the name of death or the idea of danger, who had experienced the evils of monasticism forcibly in his own history, as the son of parents whom the conventual vow into which the father had been deceived by falsehood had debarred from matrimony, to borrow a comparison from later times, was the Voltaire of the Reformation. Whilst a favourite of sovereigns and of the Pope, who was not without thoughts of making him a cardinal, he was holding up to universal ridicule, with acute wit and in his easy and entertaining style, the ignorance and vices of the monks, and the many absurdities of the whole Romish system. A service of a more positive kind to the cause of truth was his edition of his New Testament in Greek, with a Latin version in correction of the Vulgate, dedicated, according to the literary rage of the day, to Leo X. himself, and accepted by him with the highest approbation. Although nothing can be more false than the common saying that "Erasmus laid the egg which Luther hatched," yet he has earned a statue not far from the vestibule of the temple of the Reformation. He taught that Christianity was not in pilgrimages or fastings, the monk's hood or nun's veil, but a life according to the Gospel. Reuchlin, in physical qualities and in mental gifts a contrast to Erasmus, finally applied his great powers of acquiring knowledge to the study of Hebrew, com-

piled a Hebrew Grammar, and became one of the greatest Hebrew as well as Greek scholars of the age. Thrown into direct collision with the persecuting bigotry of the monks, he came off victor: a proof that the tide of general taste and feeling had already taken a turn. But there were many minor Erasmuses and Reuchlins, such as Hutten, men who, by their fables and dialogues, letters and poems, were perpetually ridiculing priests and priestcraft. Every city, too, had its society of learned men, of poets, or spiritualists, who under the forms of Romanism were cherishing the life of Protestantism; and amongst priests and cardinals, in the metropolis of Romanism, at the table of its high priest, no one was altogether in the fashion who did not combine with a rage for literature a contempt for the fast wearing out religious superstition of the middle ages. Thus pontiffs and cardinals were buying up Greek and Latin manuscripts at immense sums, were heightening the flavour of their sensualities by the admixture of literary refinement, were making the dogmas which their bread was given them to teach, the subject of their jests, and fondly dreaming the structure secure which their own hands had contributed to undermine. The attempts which the more serious and devout spirits in communion with Rome had made to purge away moral grossness and regenerate a decrepit system had proved failures, or only existed in writing, to be the more palpably mocked in the life: and it was not in the nature of things that a condemned pile, sinking under the mass of its own rottenness, and which had declined the hand of repair, could much longer be preserved in tottering coherence.

It will be asked, "Why was Germany selected as the theatre of the coming struggle?" To this question it may be answered, that, according to God's all-wise designs, the light of evangelization was travelling northwards. Spain had

early been illuminated, but under the powerful influence of monks and Councils and the Inquisition an impenetrable gloom had settled down on her plains and rivers, save only that some of the tops of the Pyrenees still reflected the twilight. France, always superficial, had derided the pretensions of the Pope only to raise upon their destruction the pretensions of the Sorbonne, or of a General Council, and desired no doctrinal but only a moral amendment, and thus had in fact repudiated God's Gospel. Italy had been favoured with a Reformer after her own heart, a fervid spiritualist; but gaiety and dissipation had choked the seed of divine life. England, on the other hand, had not rejected God's word as a nation; for, although king, nobles, and clergy had succeeded in driving it from them for a time, in the hearts of the common people, even under the priest-ridden rule of the princes of the house of Lancaster, the leaven was fermenting more and more until it should leaven the whole lump. But Germany was a new country in civilization and in religious culture. It had recently emerged from barbarism. It had received and welcomed into its bosom the refugee Waldenses, the persecuted Lollards; its limits bordered on the Bohemian Brethren; it had many souls deep thinking, laborious, and devout, who revered the memory and studied the writings of Wycliffe and Huss. It seemed as if, when other lands had been overflown with the deluge of political and clerical indifference and persecution, God had been building in Germany the ark of his Church. Besides this, there was no land where the extortionate bondage of Rome, pushed to its extremest point, had become more odious to the people; annates, reservations, commendams, the countless artifices of the Roman Chancery, had drawn German wealth in impoverishing prodigality into the stream of the Tiber: and the prelate princes of Germany, who frequently felt as civil rulers

rather than as ecclesiastics, had many causes of dissension and estrangement from an usurious master like the Pontiff. To this it may be added, that, as the seat of the transferred Roman and Greek Empire, and particularly as under the sceptre of the mightiest modern potentate in the person of Charles V., whatever should be done in Germany would pre-eminently be done in the face of the whole world, and as an example to the rest of Europe. Thus divine Providence had marked out the time and the country in which the Reformation of Christendom should take its rise: and when all was in readiness, the divinely accomplished instrument for the momentous task was moved forward on the stage—Martin Luther.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE 10TH NOVEMBER, 1483, TO THE SUMMER OF 1517.

1483. In the close of the fifteenth century, there lived an industrious and frugal couple, John and Margaret Luther by name,* in a peasant's cottage, in the village of Mora, near Eisenach. The family to which the name of Luther appertained, was a large and respected one† among the peasantry of that part of Saxony, and had its representatives in all the neighbourhood surrounding Eisenach. If there was any difference between John and Margaret Luther, and other families of the same extensive genealogical stock, it was certainly not in the article of worldly circumstances, for John was a wood-cutter, extremely poor; and Margaret often carried home upon her shoulders, with a child trudging at her side, bundles of faggots which her good man had cut in the forest. The distinction was rather in the superior sense, piety and worth of the young couple at Mora. John was a rigidly just, truthful, and withal strict man, an example of household severity, recalling instances of the patriarchal age: and Margaret, says Melchior Adam, was "a model to her sex in chastity, reve-

* Spelt also Ludder or Luder. Margaret's maiden name was Lindemann.

† The cognizance of the Luthers was a hammer. Martin changed the hammer to a cross, which he placed between three circles intersecting one another, and in each of the intersections a rose. His Doctor's ring has this coat of arms; and it is also to be seen in his cell at Erfurth by his portrait; and in the inscription on the wall by his grave in Wittenberg church.

rence, and devoted piety," as well as in laborious housewifery 1483.
and thrifty economy. Two sons had already been born to the estimable pair, when on the 10th November, the eve of St. Martin's day, in a friend's house or in an inn at Eisleben,* whither they had been attracted by the fair, (although some accounts state that they had already left Mora, and were then settled at Eisleben,) Margaret gave birth very unexpectedly to a third son,† who was taken into St. Peter's Church the next day, and after the saint to whom it was sacred, baptized by the name of Martin. No prognostics or prophecies foretold the celebrity to which this son was destined. John and Margaret Luther subsequently removed to Mansfeld, a district under the Lordship of the Counts of Mansfeld, renowned for its extensive and lucrative mines. Here they prospered by honest industry: and John became the owner of two small furnaces, and in process of time was elevated to be a member of the Town Council.

The influence of education in forming the mind and the character, can only be ranked second to that of nature itself, or the stamp which God himself infixes on the heart and on the head. And certainly the education which little Martin enjoyed or underwent, was exactly adapted to fit and prepare him for the arduous duties and trials of his future career. John Luther was a pious man, and often prayed that his children might be filled with the grace of God. He moreover loved learning; assembled in his cottage, as often as he could, such learned men as would honour his dwelling with a visit;

* The house in which Luther was born was made public property, renovated, and formed into a school-house for boys a century after his birth.

† Besides two sons older than Martin there were several daughters older or younger, six in all, of whom only two it appears married; and the number of children was made up to ten by the birth of another son, James, who will be met with in these pages.

1483. and resolved that little Martin, who evinced superior abilities at a very early age, should be brought up to be a scholar. With a view to this he used to carry him on his own shoulders, when he was too young to walk alone, or have him conveyed under the charge of Nicolas Emler, or Emilius, who afterwards became his son-in-law, to a day-school in Mansfeld,* where Martin acquired the elements of knowledge, learnt his Creed, Ten Commandments, and "Our Father," Donatus, and Cisio Janus, and to sing Christian hymns.† Martin suffered from no deficiency of moral domestic discipline; for, though rigidly upright and just, so that his character was widely respected, and this influence was ever afterwards felt by Martin himself in his days of celebrity, John Luther was so severe a father, that his favourite son, if he had done wrong, would often hide away from his resentment in the large chimney of the cottage; and such a congenial help-meet in this respect was Margaret, that little Martin was once whipped by her for some act of dishonesty about a nut, until the blood ran; and he never forgot the chastisement or its lesson. At school severity was practised on a more rigorous plan than even at home; and once Martin was flogged in one day fifteen times. Doubtless the spirit was braced and the nature hardened against the rougher discipline of mature life by these early chastisements: but they had the effect of associating in the mind the ideas of justice and severity, as inseparably united together; and his regarding the Almighty under that double aspect was the principal reason which impelled Martin Luther when just attaining manhood to enter a monastery.

1497. In 1497, when fourteen years of age, Martin was sent to

* "Gestavit in ludum literarium adhuc parvulum Georgii Emilii pater, qui cum adhuc vivat, testis hujus narrationis esse potest."—Melanchthon.

† Mathesius, p. 4

the choral school of Magdeburg, conducted by Franciscans, 1497.
together with John Reineck, a boy of the same town, his friend and playmate: with whom the friendship thus contracted in childhood continued through life, when Luther had become the greatest name in Germany, and Reineck was also a distinguished man. The time when Martin Luther was sent to Magdeburg was memorable as the period of Andreas Proles' teaching in that city the necessity of a reform in the Church. As John and Margaret were still poor, their son was obliged to eke out a maintenance by the resource common with German boys of singing in the streets at the house-doors, and begging in recompense of the song for scraps of meat or a piece of bread. And thus Luther acquired many a lesson of experience which he could in after years recount to his audience from the pulpit in illustration of the duties of the Christian life. "Importunity in prayer," he would say, "will always in the end bring down from heaven the blessing sought. How well do I remember singing once as a boy before the house of a rich man, and entreating very hard for some bread. At last the man of the house came running out, crying aloud, 'Where are you, you knaves?' We all took to our heels; for we thought that we had angered him by our importunity, and he was going to beat us; but he called us back, and gave us two loaves."* When Luther had himself become great, if not rich, his door was never shut against the poor boys who sang for the dole of charity: and he would admonish others to practise the same liberality. "Never despise the poor boys who sing at the house-doors, and ask bread for the love of God. How often have I been one of such a group!"

Notwithstanding that the instruction at Magdeburg was

* House-Postils.—Walch. XIII. p. 535.

1497. gratis, his parents' means proved inadequate to maintain Martin beyond a year at the choral school there; and he was then sent to a school at Eisenach, in the neighbourhood of
1498. which, as well as in the town itself, he had many relatives, who might be disposed to lend a helping hand towards his subsistence. But even at Eisenach the straits of penury were severely felt by the Mansfeld miner's son; and it seemed uncertain whether he could support very long the unequal contest with necessity. But in this dilemma, God himself found him a friend. Martin was one day very cold and hungry singing in George-street, when a good woman, Ursula Cotta, the wife of Conrad Cotta, a man of consideration among the burghers, struck with the musical tones of his voice, and observing he was the same boy who sang so sweetly in church, and whose demeanour there was so good, opened her door, called him in, and gave him a hearty meal. Her husband Conrad soon afterwards came in, was pleased with Martin's countenance and conversation, and learning that he was very poor, assented to his wife's proposition that he should become an inmate of their dwelling. The Cottas had a little son, Henry, with whom Martin soon formed a close intimacy, questioned him on his catechism, and retained this, like all his other friendships, for the remainder of his life. "There is nothing kinder than a good woman's heart," Luther would say in after years, commemorating the never-to-be-forgotten charity of the Cottas towards him; "happy he whose fortune it is to obtain it!" Thenceforward he was safe from want during the rest of his stay at Eisenach. His studies in the school embraced Latin, rhetoric and verse-writing; his amusements consisted chiefly in playing on the flute and lute, of both which, the good Cotta pleased to encourage his talent for music, made him a present; and he learnt to play on them without a master; and especially excelled in accompanying

the lute with his voice. His taste for poetry developed itself as early as his turn for music, and at this period of boyhood he was remarkable for extreme fluency and copiousness of language, both in speaking and writing, and for skill in verse-making. It is some indication even of boyish character that the Rector of the school, John Trebonius, gained his esteem and regard, not more by his ability than by the courtesy and respect with which he treated his scholars. In contradistinction to the unmannerly overbearance of the other masters, Trebonius would take off his hat to the scholars on entering the schoolroom, and admonish others to show the same deference to worth and learning, as yet in a state of pupillage. "There are great men," he would say, "here before us: some of these boys will one day be men of learning, burgomasters, chancellors, and doctors." Such words struck a cord in Luther's heart. 1498.

In his eighteenth year, and on the seventeenth of July, 1501, he commenced his career at the University, or High School of Erfurth, his father making considerable personal sacrifices, although with the utmost cheerfulness, working earlier and later, and living more sparingly, to afford him this advantage. At the University he read Cicero, Virgil, Livy, and other Latin authors, not only, Melancthon states, for the beauty of their style of writing, but even more for the examples of life and the excellent precepts of morality with which their writings abound. He likewise studied and rapidly acquired the science and art of dialectics, the thorny labyrinth which beset the entrance of every learned profession of that age. But his simple truthful nature revolted from useless subtleties and idle quibblings; and his inclination rather led him to acquire an acquaintance with things, than to expend much time and labour on the study of words. The influence 1501.

1501. of domestic piety, as exemplified at the miner's hearth in Mansfeld, was not lost upon the University student; and even at this period, Mathesius is careful to observe that he was diligent in prayer, and took for his motto that "carnestly prayed is more than half studied." Had he enjoyed more general and extensive mental culture, Melancthon is of opinion it would have exerted a most beneficial effect in softening those asperities of character which controversy and other trials afterwards revealed; but all that he learnt he learnt thoroughly; he rather "knew much than many things," and his acquirements, as compared with those of cotemporary students, were a theme of admiration to the whole University.

It seemed accident which first directed his mind into that channel of reading and thought in which he was destined to reflect the light of God to men. One day he was opening one volume after another in the University library, when he
1502. lighted upon a book which riveted his attention. It was the Latin Vulgate of the whole Bible; and Martin Luther found with surprise that it contained "more Gospels and Epistles than those in the Postils." He turned over the pages, and was arrested by the history of Hannah and Samuel, and warmed over the description of the mother dedicating the child of many prayers to the Lord. He was soon called away, but, as often as he could, returned to the library and spent his spare moments in poring over the new found treasure.

1503. In 1503, he became Bachelor of Philosophy. But soon afterwards a severe and dangerous malady stretched him upon his bed in despair of life, and in this state he was visited by an aged priest, who addressed him with words of comfort. "My bachelor, take heart; you shall not die of this sickness: our God will yet make a great man of you, and use you to comfort many others; for whom God loves on him he lays the

holy cross, under which the patient learns much."* This prophecy revived Martin's courage, and years after its fulfilment he was wont to recur to it with strong feelings of grateful recollection. 1503.

In 1505, he was made Doctor of Philosophy, or Master of Arts; and began to lecture on the physics and ethics of Aristotle, until, as he says, he knew them almost by heart, and he lectured also on other branches of philosophy, and for a while entertained the idea of studying for the bar, according to his father's long-cherished wish. 1505.

Shortly after, Luther allowed a respite for a season to his studies, and paid a visit to the miner's dwelling at Mansfeld. If any one had met him, it has been well said,† as he travelled on foot towards his home, his sword and hanger at his side, a warlike appearance with a gentle and peaceful heart, gay in his indigence, with pure morals under the ostentation of disorder, he would have failed to recognise in the young German the future Reformer.‡ It was as he was returning to the University from this visit, that an event occurred which determined his future path in life. He had approached very near to Erfurth, when a violent thunderstorm overclouded the heavens, and according to some accounts a stroke of lightning struck his dear companion Alexius dead at his side.§ Luther,

* Keil. p. 11.

† Michelet, Memoires, I. p. 21.

‡ Lingke relates, that, in returning home, Luther's sword fell out of the sheath and cut a vein in the leg. Luther was carried home, and the effusion of blood stayed by his invoking the Virgin.

§ This account is very doubtful. Melancthon only remarks, "Hosterrores seu primum seu acerrimos sensit eo anno cum sodalem nescio quo casu interfectum amisisset." Melchior Adam says, "Fulmine, ut volunt, et commilitonis violentâ morte territus." Jürgens supposes that Luther's friend met his death in a duel, and that the thunderstorm was later; and as Luther entered the monastery on St. Alexius' day, the name of the Saint was given by common rumour to his friend.

1505. in the utmost terror of God, fearing that his own end was imminent, vowed to St. Anne that if his life were spared he would consecrate it to religion by taking the monk's hood. It seemed as if a voice from heaven spoke to him in the crash of the thunderstorm: a light from heaven struck on his senses as on another Saul; he had been providentially rescued from the divine vengeance; his future years were to be spent in appeasing God's anger and earning heaven.

But before he parted for ever from the world, he resolved to have one evening of merriment and social converse with his most intimate associates. He spread the best cheer he could before them; music and wit seasoned the mirth of the company; all was enjoyment: and the host was very careful not to let a hint drop of the determination which he had formed.* It was the seventeenth July, St. Alexius' day. As soon as ever his friends had left his apartment, Luther chose two books from his collection, a Virgil and a Plautus, and with these in his hand in the dead of the night sought the convent of the Eremites of St. Augustine. The gate opened to his knock; he passed beneath the portal; the fraternity were equally surprised and rejoiced that one of the brightest ornaments of the University demanded to be enrolled in their number. The next day, he took leave of his friends and messmates in a letter, sent back to the University his master's ring and gown, and wrote to inform his parents of the resolution which he had carried into effect. Many members of the University came to the convent gate, and requested to speak with him; for the course he had adopted seemed to them the height of the wildest folly: but they were not granted admission, and for a whole month no one could see or

* Keil. p. 12. Ohne ihnen das geringste von seinem vorhaben merken zu lassen. But there are different accounts.—Walch. XXIV. p. 76.

approach him. His father was overcome with rage and dis- 1505.
appointment; and it was in vain that his wife laboured to console him. He had anticipated Martin's acquiring eminence in the legal profession, contracting a wealthy alliance, and becoming a person of opulence and note. That such hopes might be realised, what sacrifices had he not made for a long succession of years! In a letter expressive of extreme displeasure, he again addressed his son with the pronoun "Thou," instead of the respectful "You," which he had employed towards him ever since his taking the degree of Master of Arts. And some accounts state that John Luther journeyed to Erfurth and expostulated with Martin at the convent: "Take care that that voice you heard from heaven prove not a delusion of the devil; how can a son do right in disobeying the counsel of his parents?" But the enraged father was to be taught acquiescence in the will of Providence. The same year the plague carried off two of his sons; and it was reported that the monk of Erfurth also was dead: the father's heart became softened; and he had so far relented two years later, when Martin was ordained priest, as to consent to be present at the ceremony.

Meanwhile the drudgery to which Luther was subjected in his noviciate would have disgusted any mind less earnestly devoted than his to monasticism. "If ever monk," he afterwards said, "could have got to heaven by monkery, I might have done so. I wore out my body with watching, fasting, praying, and other works." "What I underwent as a monk," he would declare from the pulpit in after years, "so shattered my head, that I have never recovered the effects of it, and all my life long I never shall."* As novice Luther had to open and shut the gate, wind up the clock, sweep the chapel, clean the rooms, and such-like menial duties. He found most of his

* House-Postil for Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

1505. brother monks lazy, stupid, and ignorant, fond of good cheer, and each had set before him for supper two cans of beer and a can of wine.* It was their maxim that holy words, even without being understood by those who repeated them, would make the devil fly; and all their devotion was to mumble over at stated times the horæ canonicæ. Most of them soon conceived a dislike to Luther as a man of learning. If he asked time for his studies, he was reminded that the interests of the convent were served, not by study, but by bringing home flour, eggs, fish, flesh, and money; and as soon as he had finished his indoor labours the cry was in their doggerel, "Saccum per nackum,"—"Go through the streets with the sack and get us what you can to eat." It was only the mind bent on appeasing God's wrath which rendered this tedious and unceasing drudgery at all bearable. At length the University interfered in behalf of one of its members; and it was arranged by the Prior that Luther should be allowed time for private study.

He flew to reading with the avidity of one long debarred a favourite pursuit. He read the patristic writings, above all, the works of Augustine throughout, but particularly his Exposition of the Psalms, and treatise on the Letter and the Spirit. But reading Augustine inflamed his thirst to draw more deeply from the well of Scripture itself. He longed to have a Bible, that unattainable book, as his own; as it was, he could only use the Vulgate from the convent library: and much that he read of the Scriptures seemed at first strange and inexplicable to his apprehension. He read of God's conversing with the patriarchs, as detailed in Genesis; and feared it must all be fable; the terrible God could never con-
1506. verse as man with man.† After his ordination he was

* Tischreden II. p. 290, &c.

† "As one shoemaker with another"—are Luther's exact words.

directed to study the Schoolmen, not a congenial task; but 1506.
in the spirit of obedience he read Peter D'Ailly, and Gabriel Biel, till he knew them nearly by heart: he read Occam, whom he preferred to Aquinas, and also Scotus; he read also Gerson, and studied the Glossa Ordinaria and Nicolas Lyra. Not only was his memory exceedingly tenacious, but he profoundly reflected on all that he read; and often a single passage or word would engage and engross his thoughts for hours. At the same time he was studying Greek and Hebrew with such helps as the convent offered.

The general demeanour of Luther amazed the Eremite brethren. His character before entering the monastery had been social, and even jovial: he was now exactly the reverse; silent, abstracted, and solitary. The monks could not comprehend him. He confessed very often: not about women, or any of the usual sins of monks; but about his spiritual conflicts, or what he calls, "the true knot, the real question —How shall a man be just before God?" His father confessor knew nothing of such trials; he had never experienced or even heard of them before; and Luther became more despondent than ever, thinking that he alone was harassed with such perplexities and struggles. He gasped for communion with God, for a sense of reconciliation, an assurance of salvation. Consciousness of sin thrust him back from God. "It is not God who is angry with you," his father confessor told him repeatedly, "it is you who are angry with God." But it was of no use. He read the passage, "Save me in thy righteousness;" and enquired how the righteousness of God could be a cause of salvation. "I thought only," he afterwards wrote, "of that active righteousness whereby God punishes the wicked: I understood not of that passive righteousness whereby he maketh righteous in Christ the penitent sinner. The righteousness of God in the Scriptures almost

1506. always means faith and grace." On one occasion, if Cochlæus is to be believed, when mass was celebrating, Luther, in the intensity of agony, fell down crying aloud, "It is not I—It is not I"*—meaning, perhaps, that Christ's blood could not cleanse such a sinner as he was; or there may have been some ideal sin present to his imagination of which he protested he was not guilty. On another occasion he remained closeted in his cell without food for some days; this was not unusual with him, excepting in the duration of his absence, so that at last his door was tried; it was found locked; they called to him, but no answer was returned: the door was then forced open, and Luther was discovered lying insensible upon the ground. His friends in the town heard of his state; and Lucas Edenberger entered with some choral singers, and struck up one of his favourite hymns; this revived the poor monk, he opened his eyes, consciousness returned, and he arose from the ground. But often did Luther spend whole days and nights without food or rest, and even forgetting his prayers, in the intensity of study; then he was overwhelmed with regret for this omission, and to make amends he spent days and nights in the intensity of prayer. The only joyful interlude in such a troubled history is supplied by the recreation of music. He sometimes retired to lonely haunts and amused himself with his flute; and after his ordination he would sometimes preach to the shepherds and ploughmen of a neighbouring village, and returning home listen to their songs, or join in them† with all the enthusiasm of his heart.

When the Vicar-General of the Augustines in Germany, John Staupitz, came on a visit of inspection to the convent of Erfurth, amidst the usual variety of common-place characters

* Cochlæus, p. 2. † Seckend. l. p. 21.

which the fraternity presented, his eye rested with curiosity 1506.
on such a serious brow as "brother Augustine's;" such was the name which Luther had assumed. Staupitz enquired the history of the young monk from the prior, and that added to the interest awakened by his appearance. In the confessional, the sympathy of congenial tastes was increased to friendship; and Luther unburdened his conscience with the greatest confidence to such a gentle superior, whose character for piety was held in universal esteem.

"I promise to God," he exclaimed, "but sin is always too strong for me." "I have myself vowed more than a thousand times to lead a holy life," Staupitz replied, "and as often broken my vow. I now trust only in the mercy and grace of God in Christ." To Luther's statements of his terror of God on account of his sinfulness, the Vicar-General answered, "Look at the wounds of Jesus Christ; see the Saviour bleeding upon the cross; and believe in the mercy of God." Luther's idea of repentance was, that it is made up of mortifications and macerations of the flesh, and he could never be satisfied that his degree of repentance was sufficient to propitiate the Divine favour. Staupitz explained to him, that to repent is to turn with the heart to God, the God who had first loved him; and that the heart, not the body, must be contrite and broken. But besides instruction from his own lips, Staupitz gave to the young monk a Bible for his own property, and thus placed him at the feet of the Saviour himself. Luther's heart overflowed with gratitude when the prize which he had so long coveted was at last in his hands, his own possession, never to be removed from his cell. Still his melancholy could not wear entirely away; but despair at times again seized him. Observing him one day seated at table in a very abstracted mood, Staupitz enquired, "Brother Martin, why are you so sad?" "How should I be other-

1506. wise?" Luther replied. But when they were alone, Staupitz unfolded to him the divine motives in his trials: "Dear Martin, you know not how profitable and necessary such temptations are for you. God sends them not in vain; he is training you, and will use you for great things." "He thinks," Luther said to himself, "that I am learned, and that, without such trials, I should become proud." Keeping up a correspondence with his spiritual father between the different visits of inspection, Luther in one letter exclaimed in his anguish, "My sins! my sins! my sins!" "Oh," Staupitz replied, "your sins are ideal; Christ is the Saviour not of fictitious but of actual sinners."

Luther's health sunk under the pressure of his severe conflicts, and he became dangerously ill. The old monk who was his ordinary father confessor visited him in his sickness, and, after listening to the details of the horror which he felt of God's wrath on account of his guilt, and the doubts which perplexed his heart, and aggravated his malady, replied by citing the article of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins;" that is, not merely of Peter's sins, or David's sins—for devils believe so much—but of my own sins." And the old monk went on to quote a passage from a sermon of St. Bernard: "The testimony which the Holy Spirit applies to thy conscience is this: 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' And so, declares the Apostle, 'we are justified by faith.'" These enlightened words, confirmed by Scripture, from the lips of the simple old man, poured the balm of comfort on Luther's troubled spirit. His illness abated as peace returned; he rose from his bed, and regained his strength. It was probably this old brother monk who gave Luther "The Dialogue between Athanasius and Arias before Constantine, copied out with his own hand," of which he says subsequently that he read it with the utmost ardour of faith, and gratitude to

the donor, who he doubted not was a true Christian, although 1506.
under the cowl of damnation.* Luther was now deeply conversant with the Scriptures, particularly with St. Paul's Epistles, which he studied with delight and an intuitive comprehension of their meaning, from their applicability to his own trials as well as because his mind was cast in the same logical mould as the Apostle's; and, when his trials recurred, he comforted himself under them with the passage, "We are justified by faith without the deeds of the law." The Gospel scheme of salvation acquired order and consistency in his apprehension. "The eternal laws of the universe," says Ranke, "require that a deep and earnest longing of the soul after God should at length be appeased with the fulness of conviction;" in other words, the scriptural promise was at last made good to Luther—"Every one that seeketh findeth."

In the spring of 1507, "Brother Augustine" was to be 1507.
ordained priest by Jerome Bishop of Brandenburg. And on this occasion, in inviting John Braun, Vicar of Eisenach, to be present at his ordination, Luther, in his earliest extant letter, says—"Since the glorious God, holy in all his works, has deigned to exalt me, who am a wretched man and every way an unworthy sinner, so eminently, and to call me to his sublime ministry by his sole and most liberal mercy, may I be grateful for the magnificence of such divine goodness (as far at least as dust and ashes may), and duly discharge the office committed to me." He was very glad of an opportunity for full reconciliation with his father, and wrote to him a most dutiful letter, imploring the favour of his presence, and requesting him to fix the day of ordination. John Luther complied with this entreaty, and named the 2nd May (Domi-

* De Wette, IV. p. 427. "Sub damnato cucullo verus Christianus."

1507. nica Cantate*) ; when the Bishop of Brandenburg, placing the cup in Luther's hand, bestowed on him the power of "sacrificing for the living and the dead." "I marvel," Luther used afterwards to say, "that, at that moment, the earth did not open and swallow us both up." John Luther had come attended by twenty horsemen, Martin's old friends and comrades, and had brought his son a present of twenty guilders; and after the ceremony withdrew, with many of the company, to partake of a repast in the refectory. The event of the day formed naturally the subject of conversation, and the self-sacrifice of Martin in renouncing all his worldly prospects, bright as they were, and shutting himself up within the walls of a monastery, to secure his salvation and to serve God, was highly applauded. But this was more than the father could brook. "You men of learning!" he exclaimed, "have you never read in the Scriptures God's command, 'Honour thy father and mother?'" These words left a deep and unfading impression on the heart of Martin Luther; he thought more of them than of all the idle compliments which were buzzing around, and their truth afforded him one cogent reason for his subsequent work of exterminating monasticism.

Soon after his ordination, the anniversary of Corpus Christi was celebrated at Eisleben, with great pomp, by the Augustine fraternity. The Vicar-General walked first in the procession, carrying the host: Luther followed in his priestly robes. But the idea that the actual body of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was borne before him overwhelmed his soul; he staggered, and could with difficulty keep his place in the procession: his own sinfulness and God the avenger overpowered him with dread. When he was left alone with

* Fourth Sunday after Easter.

Staupitz, he recounted the agony which he had undergone at 1507.
the thought of his proximity to God made flesh. "That is not Jesus Christ," Staupitz answered; "Jesus Christ does not terrify, he only comforts."

Luther had been three years, or rather more, in the Convent of Erfurth, when it pleased God, by the instrumentality of Staupitz, to draw him forth from obscurity to the theatre of active life. The University of Wittenberg had been founded in 1502 by Frederic Elector of Saxony, commonly called the Wise, partly on his own suggestion, partly on the recommendation of his brother Ernest Bishop of Magdeburg. The Pope had given his consent, as in the case of the Universities of Treves and Tubingen, for the amalgamation of the duties and revenues of several clerical offices in Wittenberg and its neighbourhood, with the different Professorships. The University studies were conducted upon the humanist principle, in opposition to the scholastic system, which continued to prevail in many of the more ancient seats of learning. And indeed the two men who were principal agents of the Elector in this undertaking, were both distinguished by a spirit of enlightenment beyond that of their age. Dr. Martin Pollich, of Mellerstadt, "the first rector and father of the University of Wittenberg," according to the inscription on his tomb, was known in a period of high-sounding titles as "the light of the world," and held the rational opinion that the study of theology would be best promoted by the general study of literature. The other agent in founding the new school of learning was Dr. Staupitz, already mentioned in these pages, the Vicar-General of the Augustines, with especial jurisdiction over forty convents in Misnia and Thuringia, whose injunction to the monks under his authority to "study above all books the Holy Scriptures, and instead of Augustine or any of the fathers to have the Bible read to them over their

1507. meals," is a sufficient indication of religious enlightenment. Staupitz was of a noble family in Misnia, of dignified appearance, much used to courts, and a general favourite with the great, and particularly with Frederic the Wise, by his genial temper and vein of homely humour. His office gave him peculiar facilities for selecting fit persons for the different Professors' chairs at Wittenberg; and he now recommended "brother Martin," as one for the extent of whose attainments and abilities he could readily vouch, to the notice of the Elector.

1508. Accordingly, Luther was rather suddenly summoned from Erfurth in October, 1508, to occupy a cell in the Augustine Convent of Wittenberg, of which at that time only the dormitory was standing, the foundations of the rest of the building being not much more than level with the ground. He packed up his few possessions, the principal of which were a Greek and a Latin Bible, and obeyed the call with so much speed that he was obliged to wish several of his friends near Erfurth good-bye by letter from Wittenberg. He was appointed Lecturer in Physics and Dialectics. "I am now," he wrote to his old friend Braun, "by the will or permission of God, at Wittenberg; and am well by God's grace, excepting that the study of philosophy is much against the grain with me, and from the first I would most gladly have changed it for theology; the theology I mean that searches the kernel of the nut, the marrow of the wheat, the marrow of the bones. But God is God, and man is often, nay always, mistaken in
1509. his judgment."* But in March, 1509, Luther was created Bachelor of Theology, and entered upon his deeply desired task of lecturing on the Holy Scriptures. His spiritual training had been progressing as at Erfurth; he had explored

* De Wette, I. p. 6.

the Bible deeper and deeper, and had besides spent much time 1509.
over Augustine and the sermons of Tauler the Dominican, one of the mystic school who had flourished in the preceding century. And in his temptations to despair on account of his sinfulness, he had repeatedly felt the sustaining power of the text, "The just shall live by faith."

Passing from his cell to the lecturer's chair with the Scriptures in his hand, he proceeded to pour out with the enthusiasm of his own rooted convictions, to a crowd of students which was continually augmenting in number, the truths which he had learnt himself by long and most trying process, but the joy of which beamed over his features as he spoke. Such lecturing was altogether a novelty: the Bible itself was a new book in that day: and Luther's profound acquaintance with every part of it raised the admiration of his auditors. Dr. Mellerstadt himself went to hear him lecture, and pronounced the verdict, "The monk will reform the whole Romish Church; he builds on the prophets, apostles, and the word of Jesus Christ: and that no philosophy can overthrow, no Sophist, Scotist, Albertist, Thomist, or Tartarist."* Luther's lecture time was the first hour after dinner.†

Staupitz was much gratified by the success of his "dear Martin" in the lecture room, and requested him next to essay his powers in the pulpit. "It is no light thing," Luther replied, "to speak in God's stead." He proceeded to insist that he had fifteen arguments for resisting the call to the office of preacher: in fine that, if the Vicar-General compelled him to undertake it, it would prove his death within a quarter of a year. "Be it so," Staupitz answered with a smile, "Our Lord God has great things a doing, and needs wise people

* Mathes. p. 11.

† It should have been at six o'clock in the morning; but was changed "ob commoditatem." Seckend. I. p. 19.

1509. above also." The vow of obedience precluded any farther objection. The old Augustine church stood amidst the rising foundations of the Augustine convent, a tottering mouldering edifice of wood, thirty feet long and twenty broad,* propped up on every side with stays. It has been likened by a co-temporary writer to the stable at Bethlehem in which the Redeemer of the world was born. The pulpit was a rude structure of unpolished planks standing by the south wall of the church, three feet high from the floor. Here Luther first preached the Gospel of Christ, in language as plain and simple as the rustic edifice, but with a clearness, power, and zeal which won the heart, it being evident, in the language of Melancthon, that "his words had their birthplace not on his lips but in his soul."† Within a short period, the timbers of the ancient church creaked with the throng of attentive listeners. The Town Council then did Luther the honour to choose him for their preacher; and he preached in the parish church. On one occasion Frederic the Wise was one of his auditors; and afterwards remarked that he was surprised to hear how well the monk spoke, and at the fund of matter with which his mind was stored. Eventually, inasmuch as the pastor of Wittenberg parish church, the brother of Gregory Bruck, subsequently distinguished as an Electoral Councillor, was an invalid, and in very poor pecuniary circumstances, Luther gratuitously became his ordinary substitute both in the pulpit and in the parish.

To complete the training of the future Reformer for his great work, it was ordered by divine Providence that he should witness the practical working of the Papal system in Rome itself. This visit to the metropolis of the Papacy took place
1510. most probably in 1510, but some writers have assigned 1511,

* Seckend. I. p. 17. † "Non nasci in labris sed pectore."

others 1512 as the date.* Seven convents of the Augustine 1510.
order were at variance on some points which cannot now be exactly ascertained, with the Vicar-General, and chose Martin Luther to represent their case to the Pope, because Cochlæus says he was "of acute intellect and bold and vehement in contradiction." He was allowed ten ducats to engage the assistance of an advocate at Rome; and a brother monk was assigned him as his travelling companion. Having crossed the Alps, Luther and his comrade found themselves amidst scenes of luxury and splendour such as they had never beheld in Germany. They rested at a convent of the Benedictines, and were amazed at the sumptuous apartments, the gay dresses, and the magnificent cheer of the holy recluses: on Wednesdays and Fridays the table was loaded as on other days with every variety of viands; and the monastic severity was metamorphosed into a pursuit of every kind of luxury and pleasure. The German strangers looked at one another in amazement; and at last Luther ventured gently to remind the monks that they were breaking the Pope's command by eating meat on fast days. But this mild reproof very nearly cost him his life; and it was only by favour of the door-keeper that he was enabled to effect a clandestine escape from the dangerous spot, and reach Padua in safety. Here he fell very sick, and suspected that the monks had given him poison: but by eating a pomegranate he obtained some relief from the violence of the pains in his head. At Bologna he was again seized with severe pains in the head, attended with a dreadful ringing in the head and ears. The idea of God as an avenger again haunted him; consciousness of sin again tortured his mind; and he was only enabled to bear up under

* Mathesius places it in 1510; Melancthon in 1512. "Post triennium Roman profectus, &c."

1510. sickness and spiritual anguish by the comfort of the text, "The just shall live by faith." And this text proved his best medicine. As soon as health would allow he resumed his journey with brother Ursel; and after a toilsome travel of many days, through Milan, where he found with surprise another mass book than the Roman in use, and through Florence, which enkindled his warm admiration by its well-ordered hospitals, across an arid country, contrasting with the Saxon verdure, he came at last in sight of the long looked-for towers of the holy city. Falling prostrate to the earth, and raising his hands to heaven, Luther exclaimed, in the fervour of his delight, "God save thee, O Rome, seat of the Holy One; yea, thrice holy by the blood of the sainted martyrs shed within thy walls."

Luther entered Rome by the gate of the people, and remained a short time, about fourteen days, in the holy city. But it was a season of continued religious excitement and enthusiasm to a youthful devotee of his imaginative and enthusiastic temperament. He ran from church to church and tomb to tomb, listened with rapt interest to every idle legend, and believed implicitly all that was told him. He celebrated mass frequently, and half grieved that his parents were not dead, that he might release them from purgatory by his masses, prayers, and works. He had heard the proverb—"Blessed is the mother whose son says mass on St. John's eve;" and, indeed, he had hurried to Rome with a longing desire to win the blessing; but the crowd of competitors prevented him from achieving his hope. He attempted to climb upon his knees the Scala Sancta, or Pilate's Staircase, miraculously transported, as the legend declared, from Jerusalem to Rome. But in the midst of this holy effort, a voice in the depth of his heart seemed to rebuke him, crying, "The just shall live by faith." He saw and heard a great deal which,

without producing much impression at the time, bore durable 1510.
fruits afterwards, and was never obliterated from his memory. He heard anecdotes of Alexander VI., Cæsar Borgia, and the reigning Pope Julius II., of other popes, of their sons, daughters, and mistresses, which drew from him an involuntary shudder.* He stood by the statue of a pope, "represented as a woman with a sceptre in her hand, arrayed in the pontifical garb, and with a child in her arms;" she had been delivered of a child on that spot, so the legend affirmed; but the Saxon enthusiast only expressed his astonishment that the Pope and Cardinals should suffer it to remain where it was. He sat at table with many priests, and heard them laugh over their wine at the mysteries of the Christian religion, and boast how they deluded the silly people by changing the words of consecration in the mass to "Bread thou art, and bread thou shalt remain; wine thou art, and wine thou shalt remain." When he said mass, he was reproved for his tediousness; the Roman priests could say mass seven times over as quickly as he could say it once. He was one day at the Epistle when the priest next to him had finished the mass. He was jogged and urged on. "Speed, speed! Send back our Lady her Son quickly." "I would not have missed seeing Rome," he used to say in after years, "for a thousand florins!" "At Rome one may be anything save a good man."

In 1512, under a tree in the convent garden, which Luther 1512.
in subsequent years was fond of pointing out as a spot cherished in his recollections, the wish of his order was communicated to him by Staupitz—that he should be elevated to the degree of Doctor. Luther objected. "I am a weak and sickly brother, and have not long to live; look out a sound man to make

* Tischreden III. p. 181, &c. Mathes. p. 11. Walch. XIX. p. 1509. Audin is strangely forgetful. I. pp. 40—44.

1512. Doctor." "Our God," Staupitz answered, "will shortly have great things to do in heaven and earth, for which he needs young and laborious doctors. Whether you live or die, God requires you of his counsel. Obey the will of your convent, and my will, as your vow obliges you. All the costs our gracious Elector will pay of his own chamber to our God for the furthering of this university and cloister." On the 22nd of September, Luther wrote to his brother monks of Erfurth, to inform them of his intended elevation, to entreat their prayers, and request their presence at the ceremony; he would not burden them with such an expense unless the Vicar-General had enjoined him, and it were meet in itself to invite them. But he had considerable difficulty in obtaining the money for his doctorate from the Elector's servants; he had to travel to Leipsic, and after much delay he had nearly returned without it. At length, on the 18th of October, the festival of St. Luke, at one o'clock in the afternoon, he was admitted Licentiate or Master of Theology, by Andrew Bodenstein Carlstadt, Archdeacon of All Saints' Church, in the presence of the whole university and a large attendance of strangers. The following day the great bell sounded, the members of the university and many strangers assembled in the great hall, and Martin Luther was adorned with the insignia of Doctor in the Holy Scriptures, by Carlstadt, with all the customary formalities. When he was made Licentiate, he took the oath, "I swear to defend the truth of the Gospel with all my power;" and on being made Doctor, he swore "never to preach strange doctrine, condemned by the church and offensive to pious ears; but all my life long to study diligently and preach the Holy Scriptures, and maintain the Christian faith by disputation and writing against all heresies. So help me God!"*

* Mathes. p. 12. Keil. p. 21.

Soon afterwards the convent of Erfurth, jealous of Witten- 1512.
berg University—which, says Juncker, "was raising its head like a cypress beside the other trees of the garden"—at the instigation of John Nathin, one of their society, declaimed against Luther as a perjured man, who had forsaken his rightful university and convent. He was at first much incensed, but finally wrote to them a very temperate letter,* to the effect that they might have prevented his being made Doctor by one word had they pleased, and moreover that he had never sworn upon the Bible at Erfurth: "he was not conscious of having taken a single oath there." This vow to maintain the Holy Scriptures proved a source of great encouragment and strength to Luther in his future perilous career. In the midst of his trials and troubles, he says that the devil often insinuated the question, "What call have you to do all this?" Then his oath recurred to his memory; and he told his antagonists he must carry out at all hazards his Doctor's vow. He lectured at this time on the Psalms and the Epistle to the Romans, and then passed on to the Epistle to the Galatians.

Just about this period, the first letter appears of that series of correspondence between Luther and Spalatin, the Elector's secretary, which ere long swelled to a volume. Spalatin, through John Lange, an Augustine brother, who had aided Luther in learning the rudiments of Hebrew at Erfurth, enquired his opinion on the controversy which was then raging between Reuchlin and the University of Cologne. A converted Jew, of the name of Pfefferkorn, had ransacked the Talmudists and Cabbalists, and descried many blasphemies; on account of which he demanded that all Jewish writings, except the Scriptures, should be committed to the flames. Reuchlin had opposed this Vandal demand; upon which

* De Wette, I. p. 12.

1512. Hochstraten, the papal inquisitor at Cologne, and Ortuinus Gratius, censor and poetaster, had fastened on Reuchlin himself, as a heretic who ought to be led to the stake. The controversy engrossed the public mind; pamphlet replied to pamphlet; and, when the process against Reuchlin was stayed by papal rescript, the German Humanists exulted in their victory. To Spalatin's enquiry Luther replied, that John Reuchlin, or Capnio,* was in his judgment quite innocent, and a most learned man; he held him in great price and regard; but his judgment might be open to suspicion, for he was hardly free and neutral. "But what," he continued, "shall I say of this, that they are attempting to cast out Beelzebub, and not by the finger of God? It is this I mourn and grieve over. We Christians are wise abroad, and fools at home. There are a hundred fold worse blasphemies in all the streets of Jerusalem, and everything is full of spiritual idols."

Yet with all this anxiety for Church Reform Luther's reverence for the Pope and his rules was scarcely less fervent than ever: he speaks of himself as "a most insane Papist" at this period:† and notwithstanding his dislike and even hatred to Aristotle and the Schoolmen, a tincture of scholasticism, such is the force of education, was pertinaciously clinging to his mind. The progress of enlightenment was very gradual. There is a sketch of a sermon delivered by him in German,
1515. dated November 1515, in which the symbolical language of the Canticles is applied to the harmony of the different parts of Scripture, and then to the operations of the Holy Ghost acting on the spirit through the flesh. A sermon preached by him in December of the same year contains an explanation of the mystery of the Trinity upon the Aristotelic theory of

* Capnio was Reuchlin's classical name, as Schwartzerd was called Melancthon; Gerard, Erasmus; Cauvin, Calvin, &c.

† Papista insanissimus.

being, motion, and rest. But on the essential doctrines of 1515.
Christian faith, especially justification by Christ's merits alone, his convictions and teachings were as clear as the sun's unclouded rays at noon. He was, in fact, not yet at one with himself; his doctrinal principles had to be carried out to their necessary conclusions by the logic of experience.

His "Sermons on the Commandments," although not pub- 1516.
lished until 1518, were delivered to the Wittenberg people in 1516 and 1517, and are most characteristic of the author and afford a summary of his opinions at this time. His object in them was to produce chiefly conviction of sin. Ascending the pulpit of the parish church he told the common people, in the plainest German, that "whoever hangs upon anything else save God for help or salvation is guilty of a breach of the first commandment. Outward idols are only signs of the inward idolatry of the heart, in which the whole world is sunk. There is no one who does not worship the devil in his heart, even though he refrain from the external worship of an idol. And no one can believe and trust in God unless the Holy Ghost illumine his soul." According to Luther, an act as regarded in itself is nothing. Prayers, alms, and fasting are nothing in themselves. And the law, by compelling outward conformity to God's will, the rather deters from inward conformity as using compulsion, therefore the law only produces an outside or pretended holiness. The Gospel, the Spirit of God, must create faith in the heart: then there is liberty; and in such a way alone can the commands of God be kept as they should be in any measure. He summed up with the confession of universal depravity. "All men alike are sinners in their hearts. Let no one boast himself good in God's sight: we are all guilty under every one of the ten commandments. Whoso looks in his bosom finds it so. Therefore let us all cry and howl to God to give us his Spirit, that

1516. we may not only be outwardly good before the world, but be so before God in the heart. Amen." *

He also endeavoured to simplify the duties of the confessional. "It is not expedient," he said, "to load the memory and weary out the priest with so many divisions of sins—as, 1. Omission and commission. 2. The heart, the mouth, the act. 3. The five senses. 4. The six acts of mercy. 5. The seven sacraments. 6. The seven mortal sins. 7. The seven gifts. 8. The eight beatitudes. 9. The nine sins against one's neighbour. 10. The ten commandments. 11. The twelve articles of faith. 12. The twelve fruits of the Spirit; and, further, The four cardinal and three theological virtues. Also mute sins, and sins that cry to heaven; and, lastly, sins against the Holy Ghost. All this is confusion and distraction."

An article in Luther's doctor's vow was to defend the Holy Scriptures by disputation; and he zealously had recourse to this instrument also of spreading the truth. His sermons were for the vulgar; his propositions or theses were for the learned. In February, 1516, he requests John Lange by letter to convey the enclosed theses to Jodocus Trutvetter, his old tutor at the University of Erfurth. They were directed against "the logic, philosophy, and theology then in vogue"—in other words, against Aristotle, Porphyry, and the schoolmen—which he denominates "the useless studies of the age." He says, "There is nothing I burn to do so much as to reveal that stage player, who with his Greek mask has deluded the Church. If Aristotle had not been flesh, I should not blush to affirm that he was the devil himself. And it is part of, or my greatest cross, to see excellent abilities lost in his mire." † The theses in question consisted of three con-

* Walch. III. p. 1541, &c. † De Wette, I. p. 16.

clusions, with three corollaries to each, "on the strength and will of man without grace;" and were maintained, under Luther's presidency, by his pupil Bernard of Feldkerchen, at that time Professor of Aristotelian Physics. The enquiry proposed in them was, "Whether man, created in God's image, can keep his Creator's precepts by his natural strength; and whether, if grace be given him, he can merit anything, and know that he does so?" The answer was entirely in the negative. "It is superstitious," Luther states, "at man's discretion to assign to different saints different offices of ministration." "Christ Jesus," he says, in another proposition, "is our virtue, our righteousness, the searcher of the heart and reins, alone cognizant of our merits, our Judge."* 1516.

Correspondence by letter was also sedulously kept up by Luther with his brother monks, and with many of the principal members of the humanist party, and habitually rendered subservient to a religious use. He had sold some property belonging to George Spenlein, an Augustine monk of Memmingen, and after giving an account of the proceeds, enquires of his "dearest brother"—"How is it with your soul? Are you weary of your own righteousness, and only breathing and relying in the righteousness of Christ? My dear brother, learn Christ, and him crucified; learn to sing to him; and, despairing of yourself, say—Lord Jesu, thou art my righteousness, I am thy sin: thou didst take mine and give me thine; thou didst take what thou wert not, and give me what I was not. Never seek to seem to yourself without sin. Christ only dwells in sinners. If you are the lily and rose of Christ, your conversation must be among thorns: only become, not through impatience or pride, a thorn yourself."† To another Augustine monk, who was suffering from heavy

* L. Op. Lat. Jenæ, 1564, I. p. 1.

† De Wette, I. p. 17.

1516. trials, he wrote—"The cross of Christ is divided through the whole world. Reject it not; rather receive it as a most sacred relic, not into a vase of gold or silver, but a heart of gold, a heart imbued with meekness." To Spalatin he declared his judgment of persons and things with remarkable freedom: "What offends me in Erasmus, a most erudite man, is, that in interpreting the apostles' 'righteousness of the law,' he excludes the moral law and confines the term to the ceremonial and figurative. The righteousness of the law includes the entire decalogue. Without faith in Christ men may become Fabricii or Reguli, but can no more become holy than a crab-apple can become a fig. We do not, as Aristotle asserts, become just by doing just acts; we must first be just, then we shall do just actions. The heart must be changed; the works will follow: Abel is acceptable; therefore his offerings are so." Of Frederic the Wise, he wrote to that Prince's private secretary: "Many things pleases your Prince which are displeasing and hateful to God. I do not deny that he is a very wise man in things of this world; but in things appertaining to God and the soul's safety, he is oppressed with a sevenfold blindness, and so is your Pfeffinger. I say not this in a corner, as a detractor; but would willingly say it to either, to his face."

This severe judgment had most probably reference to the superstitious zeal of Frederic the Wise. In the Spring of 1516, the Vicar-General of the Augustines was despatched to the Low Countries on the holy errand of procuring relics for the Elector's new and favourite church of All Saints: and meanwhile Luther was deputed to discharge the functions of inspector of the forty convents in Misnia and Thuringia. "Brother Martin" set about his new duties with his characteristic devoted energy. He proceeded to Grimma, thence to Dresden; to Erfurth, where he had the satisfaction of insti-

tuting John Lange as Prior; to Gotha and Salza, in which 1516.
two places he found the condition of the monasteries most pleasing; Nordhausen, Sangerhausen, and so home. This tour occupied about six weeks, including the whole of May; and, by the 8th June, he had returned to Wittenberg. His admonitions to the monks, whom he found better read in St. Thomas than in St. Paul, were to establish and diligently maintain schools, "the prime object of monasteries;" to live peaceably and chastely; and to study God's word continually. A monk of Dresden had fled thence to the priory of Mentz; and it is in these words that Luther requested he might be sent back:—"The lost sheep is mine; send him to me, either to Dresden or Wittenberg: I will receive him with open arms. It is no miracle for a man to fall. The cedars of Lebanon, which touch heaven with their summits, fall. An angel fell in heaven: Adam in Paradise. The miracle is when he who has fallen is raised again." He advised John Lange to keep a register of the consumption of bread, wine, &c., on Saints' days and holidays, which would furnish a correct estimate of the hospitality of the Convent, and be a check on the grumbling propensities of the monks. To the Prior of Neustadt, who was involved in differences with the fraternity, he wrote first upon conventual matters, and then adverted to religion—"Care not for the peace of the world; and say not with Israel, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace: say with Christ, the cross, the cross, and there will be no cross. The cross will cease to be a cross as soon as you can say, with joy, —Blessed cross, of all woods there is none such." Luther was not in good health at this time;* yet his zeal in the cause of religion was not to be quenched or allayed by any impediment of that kind.

* De Wette, I. p. 23.

1516. This year is also memorable for the printing of Erasmus' edition of the Greek Testament at Basle, whither the scholar had fled from the fury of the papistical party in England, and either lodging in the house of the celebrated printer, John Frobenius, corrected the sheets as they came fresh from the press, or superintended the work from his wanderings in Holland. In his address to the reader Erasmus expressed his hope that "even women would study the Pauline Epistles;" that "the husbandman would sing some portion of the sacred book as he held the plough, the weaver to the sound of the shuttle, the traveller on his wearisome road:"* words which bear a very deep significancy on the very eve of the Reformation, as prophetical of the commutation of his Greek and Latin versions of the Evangelists and Apostles, which quickly followed, into the living tongues of Europe. Luther too was not idle in the work of publication. In 1516 he edited the "German Theology," with a preface from his own pen; he was preparing a catechism: and in the next year he published the seven penitential psalms translated into, and explained in, German. "The morning star of the Reformation," as has been often said, rose with the opening of the year 1516. Yet in proof that the wisest of men dip but very shallowly into the councils of Providence, how little did Frederic the Wise—negociating in relics for his Cathedral Church of All Saints, Erasmus editing his New Testament, Luther visiting the Saxon convents, each a chosen instrument of God in the purification of his Church—dream of events severed from the world of facts only by the thin veil of a year and a few months!

The reputation of Luther had attracted a large number of

* "Utinam hinc ad stivam aliquid decantet agricola, hinc nonnihil ad radios suos moduletur textor, hujusmodi fabulis itineris tædium levet viator."

students to Wittenberg. Amongst others many monks, par- 1516.
ticularly such as belonged to his own order, came to enjoy the benefit of his lectures; many more than he could find accommodation for in his convent, or even in the town; and, at the end of August, in a letter to Lange, he put a veto on any further arrivals. The plague was expected. On the twentieth October he wrote to Lange—"I require two secretaries or chancellors: I do scarcely anything else all day but write letters. I am preacher to the Convent, reader at table; I am required each day as parish preacher; I am regent of studies, vicar—that is, prior eleven times over; inspector of the fish-ponds at Litzkau; counsel for the Hertzberg cause at Torgau; lecturer in Paul, also lecturer in the Psalms; besides, what engrosses most of my time, writing letters. I have seldom time to pray as I should, to say nothing of conflicts with the flesh, the world, and the devil. Yesterday *you* began the second book of the Sentences: to-morrow *I* shall begin the Epistle to the Galatians; although I fear the plague will interrupt the prosecution of it. The plague has carried off one or two persons. My neighbour Faber over the way buried one son today who was quite well yesterday, and has another son just seized with the pestilence. So you wish me and Feldkerchen to take refuge with you? I hope the world will not go to pieces, if brother Martin should drop. I shall send the monks away; but my own post is here; obedience will not suffer me to fly. Not that I am without fear of death: I am not the Apostle Paul, although I lecture on his writings; but I hope the Lord will deliver me from my fear." Luther weathered out the plague unscathed. But with so much intrepidity, he was at this time distinguished by his gentle deportment, and frequently admonished Lange, whose manners were austere, to be conciliatory towards the monks under his authority and to avoid all harsh and contumelious language.

1516. In a letter to Spalatin of the fourteenth December, Luther expresses his thanks to the Elector for having clothed him most liberally, "in better cloth than became the hood, were it not a Prince's gift." The secretary had forwarded the information that Frederic made frequent and honourable mention of him. "I am quite unworthy," Luther replied, "of mention from any one, and much more from so great a Prince. I find indeed that those who make the worst mention of me are my truest friends. To God alone be praise, honour, and glory. Amen." Spalatin had consulted him upon a project of translating some book into German. "What can do more good," Luther answered, "than the Gospel of Christ? But it is to many a savour of death unto death, to very few of life unto life. Above all things ask counsel of Christ. Even our good deeds do not please him, if they are done without his command and will. I may add, that if you are pleased with pure solid theology like the ancient, study the sermons of Tauler the Dominican. I know not in Latin or German any theology more accordant with the Gospel. Taste, and see how sweet the Lord is; and you will see how bitter is all that we are." In another letter to Spalatin, Luther begs the loan of one of the Epistles of Jerome: his own copy Lange had taken away with him; and he was anxious to read what Jerome said about St. Bartholomew, with a view to a sermon. He therefore wanted the book, or a copy of the particular passage, before twelve o'clock. "I am strangely offended," he adds, "with the follies and lies of the Catalogue and Legend." As bold in his criticism as in everything else, Luther had also denied, to the great disgust of Carlstadt and others, that the tract on "True and false Penitence," ascribed to Augustine, was really the production of that Father; "it was a most senseless and absurd treatise."

He had now attained to so much celebrity, as the most

learned man of his age in Northern Germany, and the great attraction of the University of Wittenberg, that his friendship was esteemed an honour, even by men who enjoyed considerable reputation themselves. Christopher Scheurl, the town clerk of Nuremberg, united Staupitz and "Brother Martin" in his eulogies, and requested to be allowed the privilege to be ranked amongst the friends of the latter. "I would not have you to be my friend," Luther replied,* "for it will not turn to your glory but to your danger, if the old proverb is true—'what belongs to friends is common.'" But the friendship thus begun survived many of those shocks which it would appear the future Reformer already anticipated. Luther moreover observed, with great thankfulness to God, the influence of his lectures, sermons, and disputations in his own University, which was daily growing in reputation and numbers. "Our theology," he wrote to Lange, "and St. Augustine are proceeding prosperously, and reign here by the power of God: Aristotle is on the decline; he totters to his ruin, which I hope will be eternal: the lectures on the Sentences are scorned; and if any lecturer would have an audience he must lecture on the Bible, St. Augustine, or one of the Fathers."

1516.

1517.

Staupitz was requested by George Duke of Saxony, of the Albertine branch of the Saxon house and cousin to the Elector of Saxony, to recommend him a good and learned preacher. The Vicar-General recommended "Brother Martin," who was accordingly invited by the Duke to preach in the Castle Chapel at Dresden. Luther obeyed the summons, and preached before the Duke on the twenty-fifth of July, the festival of James the Great. He chose for his subject the Gospel of the day, the petition of the mother of Zebedee's children in behalf of her two sons, and began by remarking

* In a letter dated the 27th January, 1517.

1517. on the frequency of foolish wishes and prayers; and then passed to the right object of desire—the soul's salvation. He spoke of faith, the badge of Christian discipleship, of free election and the comfort of such a doctrine viewed in connexion with the Saviour's finished work, of the obligation on all men never to despair of salvation, if they only diligently read and obey the Word of God; and he concluded with an anecdote of three virgins.* It was the first time that Luther and Duke George had been within the same walls. At his dinner table the Duke turned to his Duchess' lady of the bedchamber, Barbara Von Sala, and inquired what she thought of the sermon? "I could die in peace," she eagerly replied, "could I only hear such another!" and a month afterwards she did die, in the fulness of Christian faith. But the Duke grew very angry: "he would give a great deal," he said, "that he had never heard such a sermon at all; such preaching could have no effect but to encourage and harden men in sin." And he repeated his opinion aloud, with great warmth, several times. There was in the palace a secretary and councillor of the Duke, a licenciate of canon law, Jerome Emser by name, who entreated or rather compelled Luther to take supper with him on the evening of the day on which he had preached. John Lange and the Prior of Dresden, and a Master of Arts of Leipsic, were the other guests. It soon appeared that a snare had been laid for Luther by his entertainer: for the Master of Arts directed the conversation into the channel of doctrinal controversy; whilst behind the door a Dominican was intently listening to all that passed, and had considerable difficulty in restraining himself from bursting into the room and spitting in Luther's face. Neither Thomas himself, nor any Thomist, Luther asseverated, had ever really understood a single chapter of Aristotle. On both sides the

* De Wette, I. p. 84. See Seckend. I. p. 23.

controversy became excited and noisy. The Master of Arts 1517.
bragged a great deal of his acquirements and talents, and treated his opponent as far beneath him in learning. "Come," Luther said, nothing daunted, "do you Thomists club all your learning together, and define in what obedience to the commands of God consists: I know there is not a Thomist in the world who knows as much as that." "Give me my fee first," said the Master of Arts, extending his hand. Luther and his friends laughed outright at this evasion; and the party broke up. But Emser took care to inform the Duke of Saxony that Luther had been completely worsted in argument, and had not been able to say a word in his own defence in Latin or German. And to aggravate the disgrace he had fallen into with the Duke and his creatures, it was pretended that the story of the three virgins was intended to have a personal application, and had been supplied from the private history of the Dresden Court.

A little later Luther published ninety-nine propositions, "on the will and understanding" against the Pelagianism of the day, based on Aristotle and the schoolmen. The following selections will show the drift of his views:—

"Man having become a corrupt tree can only do what is corrupt.

"The appetite is not free to pursue good or evil; it is not free, but bound.

"Man by nature does not wish God to be God; but wishes himself to be God.

"Nothing precedes grace but an indisposition for, or rebellion against, grace.

"Man without God's grace sins every moment, though he may not commit murder, or adultery, or theft.

"It is sin not to fulfil the law spiritually.

"To love God is to hate one's self, and to love nothing else but God.

1517. "Syllogism has no place in theology."*

These propositions Luther forwarded to Lange, and offered to maintain them publicly, either in the University or in the Augustine Convent at Erfurth; for "he did not wish merely to whisper them in a corner, if the University of Wittenberg could be of so small account as to be no better than a corner." Desirous that the principles of scriptural theology should be circulated as widely as possible, he sent them also to Scheurl of Nuremberg, with the request that he would communicate them to "our Eck, that most learned and ingenious man, that I may hear and see what he says of them." This was John Meyer, more generally called Eck, from a village in Suabia, whose fame in Southern Germany, as the chief ornament of the University of Ingoldstadt, rivalled that of Luther in Northern Germany.

The preceding narrative has attempted to point out the successive stages in Luther's preparation or education for that great part in the revival of the true faith of Christ which Providence had assigned him. Early hardships, mental discipline—above all, spiritual conflicts and the deep study of God's word—had ripened him for his work. He had found God his Saviour for his own heart: and, like David, he had already poised in his hand the pebbles from the brook, the holy principles drawn from the stream of inspiration, which were to strike to the ground the giant of Pelagianism and formal religion. It would be untrue to say that he had not formed the idea of becoming a Reformer;† for he had distinctly formed it, had counted the cost, and even launched on the enterprise, and his mind was engrossed with the paramount duty of reviving the ancient doctrine of the Church, the doctrine of Scripture and of the Fathers, in place of that

* Nulla forma syllogistica tenet in terminis divinis.

† This even the mendacious Audin seems to confess. See Vol. I. pp. 56, 57.

Aristotelic Thomist school theology which had paralysed faith and heart piety. But this was all he had as yet conceived, excepting so far as he was conscious that the revival of *Scriptural truth* would bring in its train great moral blessings. His reverence for the Roman Church was as yet deep and untouched; and he only wanted to remind that large section of it, whom Aristotle and the schoolmen had deluded, what was in fact the real doctrine of the Catholic Church, as taught by the early fathers, and founded on the Bible. With a view to this doctrinal regeneration he was doing all that lay in his power, to excite curiosity, and stimulate enquiry, as the first step towards the attainment of truth. 1517.

But it must be added, that all his faith as to the success of his endeavours was built upon God alone. His religion was "God, not man;" and this principle ran through the whole of his individual character, as well as constituted the bond of unity in his teaching. Thus he never moved an inch beyond his proper sphere. He had been advanced step by step towards the goal, but rather against than with his own free consent. And making his solemn vows to God and in the face of man the landmarks of his course, he was about to be taught by the way what as yet he had no conception of: to proceed to a point far beyond his ken, nothing short of the reconstruction of the Christian faith and Church on their primitive foundations, leading one half of Christendom with him. And, as an indirect result of his success, he was destined to fix the doctrines, invigorate the energies, and do something towards purifying the life, even of that branch of Christianity which should persevere in adhering to man's authority against the dictates of the inspired word.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE SUMMER OF 1517 TO THE CLOSE OF 1520.

1517. Purgatory, the mass, and the plenary indulgence, are the three doctrines by which especially the Roman Pontiffs consolidated their power and filled their coffers. The origin of the last was as follows:—In early times penance was exacted for spiritual or moral delinquencies with extreme rigour, not by way of expiation, but in proof of sincere contrition. But gradually the real object of penance came to be lost sight of, and in a superstitious age it was looked upon in the light of a satisfaction or atonement. To assume the cross and pass to Palestine to do battle for the Holy Sepulchre, was accepted by the Church in lieu of every penance: and not only was a plenary indulgence published to all those who took the vow of the crusader; but, as money was required as well as soldiers, it was sold to such as preferred remaining at home at a cost proportioned to their rank and wealth. The application of this doctrine to another subject was easy, particularly as pilgrimages were often enjoined by way of penance: and in 1300, the centenary jubilee year was established by Boniface VIII., and a plenary indulgence was granted to all who visited Rome within the allotted time. But the interval of a hundred years was found too long, and was abbreviated first to fifty, then to twenty-five years; and at last the opportunity of buying pardon recurred at the Pope's discretion:* and a journey to Rome not always being

* Walch. XV. pp. 3—275. See Polani, Hist. Conc. Trid. p. 4.

convenient, the papal pardoners were soon to be found in 1517.
every land. Like prayers and masses, the indulgence was brought to bear on the condition of the dead in purgatory; it conveyed remission, so at least taught the indulgence merchants, for every conceivable sin; and, as the power of the keys was without limit, was even declared to avail for the pardon of sins, past, present, or future.

Leo X. was not the Pontiff to forego such a means of revenue. Engaged in erecting the magnificent fabric of St. Peter's at Rome, with a most costly establishment of ministers to his pleasures, poets, painters, musicians, huntsmen, grooms, and falconers, with a taste for all the elegancies of life, sculpture, architecture, rare manuscripts and articles of vertu, and besides, with the family of the Medici leaning upon him for support, far better acquainted with the art of giving than acquiring, and for the latter purpose compelled to employ the skill of the Cardinal Quatuor Sanctorum, he found even the mines of wealth which the Church had discovered in the credulity of the people, inadequate to satisfy his needs. In some countries the Pontiff was wont to keep the management of the indulgence traffic in his own hands; in others to let it out to contractors. When Albert Archbishop of Mentz and Magdeburg, made application to farm the profits of the sale in Germany, Leo demanded the payment due for his pallium. This the Fuggers of Augsburg, the great money firm in Germany in that age, consented to advance on the security of the indulgence proceeds; and, by their entering into a contract with Albert, the Archbishop was enabled to conclude his bargain with Leo. Personages of however high rank and position, involved in such an affair of huckstering for their reciprocal advantage, were not likely to be scrupulous in their choice of a subordinate agent, and accordingly John Diczel, or Tetzel, the son of a goldsmith of

1517. Leipsic, a Dominican and inquisitor, who had often filled the office before, and had remarkable talents for it, the voice of a town-crier, mendacity unlimited in power of invention, and extreme impudence, was pitched upon to hawk about the spiritual wares, and dispose of them on the most lucrative terms.* The Guardian of the Franciscans was joined with Albert in the Pope's commission; but he was a mere cypher, a name which might serve to reflect a little respectability on the undertaking; for as to any actual concern in it he and his order were opposed to the whole proceeding.

In the summer of 1517 Tetzel established his indulgence market at Juterbock, a few miles from Wittenberg. He was prohibited by Frederic from entering Saxony, because he objected to the indulgence tax being levied on his subjects, and also on personal grounds, for at Inspruck Tetzel had been convicted of adultery, and sentenced to be thrown in a sack into the river. Frederic had himself begged him off,† but was incensed that the pardon traffic should be entrusted to an agent of proved bad character, and for other reasons he was not on particularly good terms with the Archbishop of Mentz. Yet Frederic had purchased letters of indulgence for his Church of All Saints immediately from Rome, and thus given his sanction to the indulgence doctrine itself. Notwithstanding, however, the known sentiments of their Prince, many of the inhabitants of Wittenberg flocked to Tetzel's pardon-counter at Juterbock, and returned home with a plenary indulgence.

The theatrical colouring which Tetzel was careful to throw over his proceedings was well adapted to influence the populace. He and his party, consisting of Friar Bartholomew and

* Tetzel sold, besides indulgences, dispensations to eat meat, &c., on fast days, licences to choose such a father confessor as was most acceptable, &c. Polani. Histor. p. 4.

† Melchior Adam. Vitæ Theologorum, p. 105.

two secretaries, were generally received at the gates of a town 1517.
by the Council and the clergy in their robes, monks, nuns, choristers, and the scholars of the principal schools, and with lighted candles, floating banners, and amidst the ringing of bells mingling with the notes of music, conducted to the church or cathedral. The Pope's brief was borne in state before him, and he carried in his hand the red cross. On entering the church the tall red cross, surmounted with the Pope's arms, was set up at the high altar; the money counter was placed beneath it; and the papal brief on its velvet cushion was displayed in full view. Then Tetzel, in the garb of the Dominicans, mounted the pulpit, and with stentorian voice harangued the multitude on the infallibility of the Pope and the efficacy of his pardons. The indulgence, he stated, was the very grace of Jesus Christ; and he himself, as the dispenser of such a blessing, was not to be compared with St. Peter, for he had saved many more souls than the Apostle. At the close of the oration Brother Bartholomew shouted, "Come and buy, come and buy."

The penitents knelt at confessionals suspended with the Papal arms; they mumbled over their confession, and passed to the altar; dropped the stipulated sum into the money box, and received in return a sealed letter of pardon. But after his traffic in any place had been concluded, Tetzel commonly sat down with his assistants to a merry drinking bout; played at dice, staking sometimes, it was said, the salvation of souls on the cast; and jested at the credulity of the poor fools whom he had tricked of their money. The tavern keeper had to take his indulgence letters in exchange for his accommodation; and they thus circulated like paper money, only that they were made payable in another world.

An instance of his craft, which occurred at Zwickau, has been particularly noted by cotemporaries. The money bag

1517. had been sealed up when the chaplains and altarists applied to Tetzel to give them a supper. His invention was put to the rack, but quickly struck upon a device. He ordered the church bell to be tolled, and ascended the pulpit. The inhabitants of the place, roused by the bell from their occupations, and prompted by curiosity, repaired to the church; when Tetzel informed them that he had intended to quit their town that very day, but in the preceding night his slumbers had been broken by groans from the adjoining cemetery, of some poor soul still suffering in purgatory. Whose relative he or she might be no one could affirm, but it was unquestionably the soul of a poor adulterous man or woman; and all the pious were concerned to release the sinner from torment: in such a cause he would be the first to contribute. His example was followed by the whole company, for all wished to be regarded among the pious, who could compassionate the sins of others and their punishment. An ample sum was collected; and Tetzel and his associates sat down to a jovial entertainment, made the more merry by the adroitness which had procured it.*

When Luther first heard of Tetzel's proceedings he exclaimed, "God willing, I will beat a hole in his drum." But it was in the confessional that Luther's sincere principles of religion were first brought into actual collision with the reckless and avaricious dogmas of Tetzel. Several persons confessed their iniquities and demanded absolution with the frank acknowledgment that they had no intention of leaving off sin, which would be an unnecessary act of self-denial. In explanation of such a statement they displayed a prospective indulgence letter. Luther assured them of the absurdity of their notions and the worthlessness of the paper which they

* Walch. XV. p. 442.

thought a passport to heaven, and refused them absolution 1517.
unless they were seriously bent upon amendment. In reply they confronted with his teaching the pulpit declarations of Tetzel; and when an opportunity offered, reported to the pardon-seller what the Doctor of Wittenberg asserted of the doctrines he declaimed with such vehemence from the pulpit. The hostility was thus begun; and fresh fuel was continually added to its fire. On the 14th September Luther, from the pulpit of Wittenberg parish church, discoursed to the people on the delusions which had obtained circulation on the subject of indulgences. "According to Aquinas," he said, "Repentance was divided into Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction: indulgences could only affect the last, but could be no satisfaction for guilt; for God of his mercy freely forgives through Christ all who will turn to him and lead a holy life for the future. Indulgences therefore only remit the satisfaction or penance imposed by the Church. The poor of the place had the first claim for charity, the churches of the neighbourhood the next; and when these prior demands had been satisfied, then it might be well to contribute towards the erection of St. Peter's.* Yet it must be far better to give to build St. Peter's out of pure charity than to compound with the gift for a letter of indulgence." But he allowed of the authority of the Pope, and the existence of purgatory. When Tetzel heard of this sermon he flew into a towering rage; mounted the pulpit, vaunted the infallibility of the Pontiff, and consigned his adversary to eternal perdition as a blasphemous heretic.† And to symbolize his sense of his deserts he caused a monster bon-

* Seckend. I. p. 24. Walch. VIII. p. 533. L. Lat. op. Jenæ, I. p. 13.

† "Non jam conciones sed fulmina in Lutherum torquet, vociferatur ubique hunc hæreticum igni perdendum esse; propositiones etiam Lutheri et concionem de indulgentiis publice conjicit inflammas."—Melancthon.

1517. fire to be lighted in the market square, and rioted in his denunciations of heresy and its doom. He afterwards published in more moderate tone "a refutation" of the sermon, mentioning it as the sermon of twenty articles; and to this "refutation" Luther replied,* or rather to the corner stone of its doctrine, commending all Tetzel's "superfluous paper flowers and dry leaves to the dear wind which had leisure to dispose of them." † Some time before this, however, the Dominican had broken up camp from Juterbock, and moved to Frankfort on the Oder.

On the 31st October, the eve of the festival of All Saints, when the saintly bones and precious relics, enclosed some in gold, others in silver, or in gems, which Frederic had collected at incredible pains and cost for his favourite church, were exposed to the public gaze, and multitudes of pilgrims were thronging the way to the cathedral, Luther appeared in the crowd and posted on the door ninety-five theses ‡ on the doctrine of indulgences, which he engaged to maintain in the University against whatever opponent, mouth to mouth, the next day, or against the absent by letter. The first proposition stated—"Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in saying Repent, intended that the whole life of the faithful should be a repentance." He proceeded to say—

4. The Pope does not intend to remit and cannot remit any punishments but those he has himself imposed of his own will or by the Canons.

8. The penitential Canons ought to be imposed on the living only; nothing ought to be imposed on the dying in obedience to them.

* Freyheit des Sermons, &c. Walch. XVII. p. 564, &c. It was written by Luther in June, 1518.

† Dem lieben winde der auch mussiger ist.

‡ Lat. op. Jenæ, I. p 3.

16. Hell, purgatory and heaven seem to differ as despair, a 1517.
feeling akin to despair, and safety.

20. The Pope by the plenary remission of all penalties means simply all those imposed by himself.

25. The same power which the Pope has over purgatory generally, every bishop has also in his own diocese, and every curate in his own parish.

26. The Pope is right in that he gives remission to the dead, not by power of the keys (which he cannot), but by prayer.

32. They will be condemned for ever with their masters, who believe that by letters of indulgences they are secure of their salvation.

35. It is unchristian to teach that an indulgence letter in behalf of the dead or living can dispense with the necessity of contrition.

43. He who gives to the poor or lends to the needy does far better than he who buys an indulgence letter.

58. The merits of Christ and the saints always, without the Pope, work grace in the inner man; the cross, death, and hell in the outward man.

62. The true treasure of the Church is the ever blessed Gospel of God's grace and glory.

76. The papal pardons cannot remit even the least of venial sins as regards the guilt.

Such propositions exhibit the enlightenment of Luther's mind, notwithstanding much lingering ignorance on the merits of saints, the necessity of macerating the body, and the existence of purgatory. But he did not intend to maintain all the ninety-five theses in the affirmative: he threw them out, according to his wont, to awaken enquiry with a view to the better information of himself and others.

The same evening he enclosed the theses to the Archbishop

1517. of Mentz, whom he addressed in a most humble letter. "The grace and mercy of God, and all that may be and is. Spare me, most reverend Father in Christ, illustrious Prince, that I the dregs of men have so much boldness as to meditate a letter to your sublime dignity. The Lord Jesus is my witness that, conscious of my meanness and vileness, I have long deferred what now I essay with unabashed forehead, moved chiefly by a sense of the faithfulness I owe to you, my most reverend Father in Christ. Therefore will your Highness deign to throw an eye on a piece of dust, and hear my prayer for your and the papal clemency? Papal indulgences are carried about under your illustrious name for building St. Peter's Church, in which I do not blame the statements of the commissaries, for I have not heard them, but grieve over the false conceptions of the multitude, which I learn from all sides—that those who buy an indulgence are secure of salvation; that the soul flies out of purgatory as soon as the money jingles in the box; that the grace of the indulgence is so great, that, if a man could perpetrate the impossible crime of violating the Mother of God, it would remit it; and that by such means all punishment and all guilt are forgiven and done away. O blessed God! It is thus that souls committed to your charge, most reverend Father, are instructed to death, and every day the account you will have to render becomes more awful. For no one can be assured of salvation through any Bishop; the grace of God within us cannot even make us secure; but we are bidden to be always working out our salvation in fear and trembling. Even 'the righteous is scarcely saved:'—'Strait is the gate which leadeth to life:' and the Lord, by his prophets Amos and Zacharias, calls those who shall be saved 'brands plucked from the burning;' and everywhere declares the extreme difficulty of salvation. Why, then, by those false indulgence

fables and promises make the people secure and without fear? 1517.
For indulgences are of no avail to the soul as regards its salvation or sanctification, but only remove the sentence of the Church, the canonical penance. In fine, works of piety and charity are infinitely better than indulgences; and the chief duty of a Bishop is to teach the Gospel and the love of Christ. Moreover, most reverend Father in the Lord, in the instruction to the commissaries, published under your name (doubtless without your consent or knowledge), it is stated that indulgences are the inestimable gift whereby man is reconciled to God, and the torments of purgatory are removed; and that, for those who buy them contrition is unnecessary. What can I do, noble Prelate, illustrious Prince, but by the Lord Jesus Christ implore you to destroy that book clean out of hand, and give the commissaries another form for preaching; lest perchance some one rise up to confute them and that book, to the great calumny of your most illustrious Highness. I should dread such an event; but I foresee it must be, unless timely measures are resorted to. May your Grace receive as a Prince and a Bishop these faithful offices from one so mean, which I offer with the most faithful and devoted heart; for I am a part of your fold. And the Lord Jesus keep you for ever. Your unworthy son, Martin Luther," &c.*

He also enclosed the theses, and wrote to his diocesan, the Bishop of Brandenburg, and subsequently to others of the neighbouring prelates. The Bishop of Brandenburg in reply communicated with Luther by letter, and by a special messenger the Abbot of Lenin;† hinted his concurrence in condemning all the proclamations of indulgences, but regretted

* De Wette, I. pp. 67—70.
† De Wette, I. p. 71. Abbas Leninensis.

1517. that Luther's sermon in German had been published, and implored him not to publish, or at least to postpone the publication of the proofs of his theses. Luther himself states that he was overcome by the condescension of this treatment, and in the confusion of his modesty answered, "I am content; I had rather be obedient than work miracles." Albert of Mentz took no notice of his letter.

But however eager the Bishop of Brandenburg might be to hush up the matter to avoid ecclesiastical scandal, and however reluctant Luther himself was at this period, as he expressly affirms, to advance, it was not probable that the monks and inquisitors, whose happiest dreams were of heretics consumed at the stake, would leave the Wittenberg Professor in peace; nor could society, which was stirred to its depths by the sermon and theses, suffer the affair to drop. The theses passed to the Emperor Maximilian; to Reuchlin at Stutgard; to Erasmus in the Low Countries. The pilgrims carried them home in their wallets: translations of them appeared even in Holland and Spain; within a month they had travelled the round of Europe; a copy was offered for sale in Jerusalem. It seemed, says Myconius, as though the angels were the carriers. In the evening of one day an unknown monk had become an European character; and palace and cottage rang with his name. Letters of thanks, acknowledgments of the truth he was vindicating, poured in upon him. Many monks who like Luther himself had a relish for evangelical piety, looked forth from their cells to hail the dawn of a new religious era. Reuchlin, Hutten, Sickingen, were transported with joy; Maximilian exclaimed, "This monk will give the priests some trouble;" Erasmus hardly concealed his approval; Bishop Bibra spoke out, and pronounced the principles of the Wittenberg monk most conformable to the Scriptures; Albert Durer sent Luther a present, doubtless a work of his art, in

token of his love.* The whole world exclaimed, "What a 1517.
bold monk!" The prophecy of John Huss was remembered, that, "though they might kill the goose (Huss), after a hundred years a swan would succeed to whose notes they would listen." The hundred years had just run their course.

If the dream ascribed to the Elector of Saxony be true, it must be regarded as showing the current of opinion, or in other words, that "coming events cast their shadows before them." It is said that on the morning of the 31st October, Frederic of Saxony in his castle of Schweinitz, six leagues from Wittenberg, was pondering how to keep the festival of All Saints when he fell asleep. He dreamt that the Almighty sent a monk to him, a true son of the Apostle Paul. The monk asked permission to write something on the door of the castle church of Wittenberg, which was granted. The monk took his pen and wrote, but in characters so big, that they could be clearly read as far as Schweinitz. The pen grew longer and longer, until at last its tip reached to Rome, wounded the ears of a lion, and shook the triple crown on the Pontiff's head. All the cardinals and princes put out their hands to stay the tottering crown. The Elector in his dream did the same; and awoke with the effort. He soon dropped asleep again, and went on dreaming of the mighty monk with the long pen. The lion began to roar, the Pontiff and the States of the Empire roused themselves and called on the Elector to restrain the monk, because he was one of his subjects. Frederic awoke again; repeated a paternoster; and again fell asleep. He dreamt that the princes of the Empire, himself and his brother among them, flocked to Rome in order to break the pen; but the more they tried, the stronger it grew; it seemed made of iron and baffled all their attempts.

* Through Scheurl of Nuremberg. De Wette, I. p. 95.

1517. The Elector enquired of the monk whence he had procured such a strong pen, and was answered that it once belonged to the wing of a goose of Bohemia. Presently a loud noise was heard; a number of other pens had issued from the long iron pen, and were all writing. Frederic awoke, and it was daylight.

Yet when the first act towards the accomplishment of this prophetic vision was achieved, the Elector of Saxony was far from according his approbation. He was full of alarm for the credit of his University; he dreaded the height to which controversy might grow, and sent to Luther to intimate the pain which his conduct gave him. The monks of his convent also, and the Prior, expostulated with him on his rashness, and mourned over the disgrace which he would bring on his order. The monks of his old convent at Erfurth likewise arraigned him of conceit and pride. "That," he answered, "has always been made the charge against such as would not consult the oracles of the old opinions; the humility you require of me would be mere hypocrisy." Luther in fact had acted quite alone; neither the Elector,* nor Staupitz, nor his brother monks had known anything of his intention; he had been careful to act thus independently in order to implicate no one but himself. Moreover, whatever might be the admiration of high-spirited men like Hutten, the low-minded and timid, always the majority, anticipated Friar Martin's ruin as the sequel of the history. "Alas! poor monk," it was said, "what can you do against the power of the Church; creep into your cell, and cry, Have mercy on me." It cannot be supposed that such representations and forebodings carried no weight with them. Luther has declared that he felt for the moment alone, a poor humble friar attenuated by study and

* De Wette, I. p. 76.

fastings until "he was more like a corpse than a living man." 1517.
At the same time he revered the authority of the Church; he not only venerated, but even almost adored the Pontiff; and thus there was a struggle in his own breast between his conflicting and even contradictory sentiments. But on the other hand he was convinced he had done his duty, he had kept his vow; and it is thus he wrote to Lange—"I wish what I do, not to be done by man's counsel but by God's. If the work be of God, who can prevent it? If it be of man, who can further it? Thy will be done, Holy Father, who art in heaven. Amen."

Just at this time he made application to the Elector for some cloth which had been promised him for a gown: the courtiers, he complained, would only spin him fine words, which "would not beat into good cloth:" * and by favour of Frederic his suit was complied with. No doubt the want of a suitable gown was impressed on his mind by the probability of his having to appear in public disputations.

Tetzel had found a cordial shelter in the University of Frankfort on the Oder, and under the wing of Conrad Wimpina, a learned professor, framed two distinct series of antitheses, which he engaged to maintain "to the glory of God, the defence of the Catholic faith, and the honour of the Apostolic See." The first series related to the subject of indulgences, and stated, that,

3. Whoever maintains that Christ when he preached, Repent, intended only inward repentance and outward mortification of the flesh,

4. Without teaching or implying the sacrament of penance and its parts, confession and satisfaction, as obligatory, errs. Nay it is of no avail, if inward repentance works outward

* De Wette, I. p. 77.

1517. mortification, unless there be in act or intention confession and satisfaction,

5. This satisfaction (since God suffers no fault to go without vengeance) is by punishment or its equivalent in the Divine acceptation.

6. Which is either imposed by priests, at their discretion, or according to the Canon, or sometimes is exacted by the divine justice to be paid here or in purgatory.

9. This punishment by way of satisfaction, if once duly paid, he who is absolved is not bound to pay again.

11. This punishment imposed for deeds, for which contrition has been felt, and confession made, the Pope by indulgences can entirely remit.

Such was the Romish indulgence doctrine as explained by Conrad Wimpina, resting on the double assumption, that man can by his own acts or sufferings atone for his misdeeds, and that the priest, or at least the Pope, is in the place of God. But as the whole hinged on this supposed power of the Pontiff, the second series of antitheses, so framed as to detect "at the first glance every heretical, schismatical, pertinacious, contumacious, erroneous, seditious, ill-tongued, presumptuous, and injurious person," declared—that

1. The power of the Pope is supreme in the Church, and instituted by God alone; and the whole world together cannot restrain or augment it.

3. The authority of the Pope is superior to that of the whole Church and of a General Council; and humble obedience must be rendered to his statutes.

4. The Pope can alone determine points of faith, and interpret Scripture.

Here was the Aristotelic Thomist system of religion in full vigour. But it is important to observe how by this means, on the very threshold of the controversy, the question was

shifted back to first principles, from the doctrine of Repent- 1517.
ance and Indulgences to the alleged supremacy and infallibility of the Pope. "Tetzel," said Luther, "treats Scripture as a sow does a sack of oats." It was Scripture and the earliest Christian records which the Reformer was now driven to search upon this one head, the claim of the Pope to infallibility. One link in the Roman chain of doctrines had been unbound; and now, in consequence, the metal itself, from which the chain was wrought, was to be tested.

Tetzel and Wimpina had fixed the 20th January as the day for the disputation. It was much easier to defend their positions at Frankfort, than to take up the gauntlet which Luther had flung down, and meet him in the lists at Wittenberg. They promised themselves to carry the day without any antagonist offering to contest the palm. But in this they were deceived, for John Knipstrow, a student of the Univer- 1518.
sity, a youth of about twenty years of age, manfully maintained the opinions of Luther; and Tetzel retreated under the shield of Wimpina. At the close of the discussion Tetzel was elevated to the degree of Doctor: and in the evening, a pulpit and scaffold having been erected in the suburbs, the new made Doctor raved from the pulpit against heresy, and placing Luther's sermon and theses on the scaffold, burnt them amidst the acclamations of the crowd. Tetzel's antitheses were brought to Wittenberg by a man of Halle; the students of Wittenberg bought or seized the 800 copies which the vendor had with him, and in the ardour of their zeal for the Scriptures, and in revenge of the insult to Luther, burnt them publicly at two o'clock in the afternoon in the market place. This act, however, was regarded by the authorities with great displeasure, as increasing the danger of Luther's position.

The addresses of the indulgence-sellers to the populace

1518. had never ceased to vilify the monk of Wittenberg with every term of abuse and mode of threat. Sometimes they gave out that within five days he would be led to the stake; then the term of respite was extended to a month; or he was to be summoned before the inquisitorial tribunal at Rome. It aggravated their fury that the fictions which they rehearsed to the multitude were every day falling more into disrepute; and, amongst the clergy themselves, there were springing up those who, like Egranus the preacher of Zwickau, laughed at the foolish legends of the Saints, which a little while before had been deemed sacred.

The first direct attack upon Luther's indulgence doctrines came from Rome itself—from Sylvester Prierias, the Roman Censor, and Master of the Palace—and reached the Reformer early in January. It was a dialogue between Luther and Prierias, dedicated to Leo; and the preface stated that the following answer to an obscure monk, Martin Luther by name, had occupied the author three days, and interrupted so long his commentary on the first chapter of the second book of St. Thomas. Yet the Pope himself gave no great encouragment to the zeal of his Master of the Palace. When he first heard of the famous theses, he spoke of them as "doubtless the work of some drunken German;" but, after an inspection of them, when Prierias presented his Dialogue, replied, that "Friar Martin was a man of genius; he did not wish to have him molested; the outcry against him was all monkish jealousy." But Leo's prudence or indifference was easily overruled by his cardinals and courtiers.

Before entering on the Dialogue, Prierias laid down four rules or first principles:—"1. The Universal Church *essentially* is a congregation for divine worship of all believers in Christ; but the Universal Church is *virtually* the Roman Church, the head of all Churches, and the Supreme Pontiff.

The Romish Church *representatively* is the College of Cardi- 1518.
nals; *virtually* it is the Supreme Pontiff, who is the head of the Church, but in a different sense from Christ. 2. As the Universal Church cannot err in determining concerning faith or manners, so a true Council, doing what in it lies to understand the truth, cannot err, by which I mean its head being included; or, at last and finally (it may perhaps at first be deceived as long as the act of enquiry into the truth continues; nay, it has even sometimes erred; but at last, through the Holy Spirit, it has understood the truth), in like manner, the Roman Church cannot err, nor the supreme Pontiff; that is, officially pronouncing and doing what in him lies to understand the truth. 3. Whoever does not rely on the doctrine of the Roman Church, and of the Roman Pontiff, as the infallible rule of faith, from which even Scripture derives its strength and authority, is a heretic. 4. The Roman Church, as it can in word so in act, can determine anything respecting faith and manners. And, consequently, as a heretic is one who thinks amiss concerning the truth of the Scriptures, so too one who thinks amiss concerning the doctrine and acts of the Church in matters pertaining to faith and manners, is a heretic."

To these first principles was appended, as a corollary, that "He who, in the matter of indulgences, says that the Roman Church cannot do what it actually does, is a heretic." The Dialogue then opened with the invitation, "Come now, Martin, let us hear your propositions;" and after severe castigation by word of mouth, Martin was handed over to the ministers of the Inquisition.

Luther received this "Dialogue" from Nuremberg, and sent it to Spalatin, together with a Dialogue of Lucian, just translated into Latin by Mosellanus, both to be returned to

1518. him.* He consulted his fellow professors at Wittenberg on the expediency of returning an answer to Prierias; but it was generally agreed that the "Dialogue" must be a burlesque, like the "Literæ obscurorum Virorum." He continued to preach, lecture, and instruct the people by his writings. About this period he published an exposition of the 110th Psalm, an explanation of the Lord's Prayer, and other popular tracts; and he was writing his "Solutions" of his ninety-five theses, the publication of which he still deferred out of respect to his Bishop. He was deeply studying Scripture and the early Fathers, and examining the foundations of the Papacy. "Be assured," he wrote to Spalatin, who had asked his advice on the true mode of studying the Bible, "that the Bible cannot be understood by mere study or intellect. Begin with prayer, that it would please God of his boundless mercy to grant you an understanding of his word; not to your glory, but his own. Pray to be taught of God, and utterly distrust your own abilities; and then, in entire self-despair, read the Bible through in order from beginning to end."† "I have great reason," he wrote in another letter, "to be on the watch against pride, for my opponents are destitute of all literature, human and divine." "In every work," he wrote to Spalatin, "if we would be successful, we must be animated by two sentiments, despair and confidence; despair of all we can do, confidence in God." "Send me," he wrote to Lange, "Lucian's Dialogues, More's Utopia, which Richard Pace mentions, and his Epigrams, Wolfgang's Hebrew Institutes, above all Erasmus' Apology against Faber." Thus religiously composed, calm and peaceful, was Luther after the storm had begun, when the indulgence-merchants and the inquisitors were howling on all sides, and Rome was on the point of taking up their cause.

* De Wette, I. p. 86. † De Wette, I. p. 88.

A new antagonist rose up in the person of Dr. Eck, who 1518.
had recently contracted a friendship with Luther, which had been cemented by an interchange of letters. But Eck had two principal reasons for acting as he now did. The most eminent Professor of Ingolstadt University, itself an offshoot from Leipsic, and like that a rival of Wittenberg, he did not desire that Wittenberg or its Doctor should eclipse the reputation of other academies and Professors. He was moreover deeply imbued with the old scholastic spirit; as Luther afterwards said of him, "crammed with the bran and husks of Scotus and Gabriel, and saturated with Aristotle." Eck wrote a treatise against the ninety-five theses, at the suggestion, as he stated, of his Diocesan the Bishop of Eichstadt, to whom he submitted it and then circulated it privately amongst his friends; giving the work the name of the "Obelisks," because he marked with an obelisk those propositions which he could not assent to. The work was full of virulent abuse, and styled Luther "heretical, seditious, and Bohemian." * It occasioned the Reformer much pain, as a breach of friendship; for Eck had neither written nor given any warning of his intention, nor implied that the regard between them was to cease in any way.† Yet Luther was willing to swallow the sop, and had resolved to do so; when his friends persuaded him that he was in honour and duty bound to reply. He wrote therefore the "Asterisks," and circulated his answer privately amongst his friends. Eck had objected to the statement that "the indulgence remits only the canonical penance;" and argued, "if the penalties of the Canons are added in accumulation to the Divine penalties, they are a snare: if they are only declaratory, which is the truth, then the Pope *does* remit some actual penalties." "It is not

* De Wette, I. p. 100.

† Neque monens, neque scribens, neque valedictens.

1518. true," Luther answered, "that any penalties are imposed by God, for he freely forgives the penitent sinner, and has himself paid all in Christ. If it is meant that to remit canonical penalties without remitting Divine is a snare, this is true just as far as it is true that penalties are imposed by God at all, which is utterly false. But were Dr. Obelisk a theologian as much as he is a sophist, he would not be surprised to hear that the Canons are a snare, when the law itself is that net whereby God has concluded all under sin." Again, Eck had asserted that the Sacraments of the New Law effect what they figure, in which they differ from the Sacraments of the Old Law. "The Sacraments of the New Law," Luther answered, "do not effect the grace of which they are seals; but faith is required before every sacrament. Faith is grace. Therefore grace always precedes the Sacrament. The mistake of our Obelisk Theologian is in supposing that the Sacraments can work grace without any act on the part of the recipient, provided he oppose no barrier. This is not indeed 'Bohemian poison;' but it is the hemlock of hell." The controversy was then taken up by Carlstadt, who published some propositions for disputation against Eck's opinions. A reconciliation was attempted between Luther and Eck by Scheurl of Nuremberg their common friend; and Luther on his part wrote a letter to Eck, "most friendly and full of courtesy,"* and was willing to impute the whole to the malice of advisers. They afterwards met at Augsburg, and peace seemed restored.

A Chapter of the Augustine Order was to be held at Heidelberg. Luther was advised not to be present, on account of the dangers which might assail him by the way; but he was resolved to go. He started on foot, with a guide to carry his baggage, and passed through Erfurth and Juden-

* "Scripsi ad eum ipsum amicissimas et plenas literas humanitate." De Wette, I. p. 126.

bach to Cobourg, but found the journey excessively fatiguing. 1518.
"I sinned," he wrote to Spalatin on the 15th April, from Cobourg, "in undertaking this expedition on foot; but my contrition is perfect, the satisfaction I have paid complete, and I hope I may be allowed an indulgence letter." At Wurzberg he had an interview in the evening with the excellent Bishop Lawrence Bibra, who would hardly be refused the pleasure of sending an escort with him to Heidelberg. But he fortunately obtained a seat in the carriage of Staupitz, and after three days' pleasant travelling with the Vicar-General and John Lange, alighted at the Augustine convent in Heidelberg. It is not known what was the exact object of this meeting of the Order: but Luther, seizing his opportunity for disseminating the truth, published forty propositions, twenty-eight on Theology, the remainder on Philosophy, which he engaged to maintain on the 26th April, in the Augustine convent, since the University would not allow him the use of their hall. He maintained his "paradoxes" on faith, grace, justification, and the spiritual impotency of the will, against five doctors; of whom four argued with great modesty, and even dexterity, although the views advanced were strange to them; the fifth remained silent, except that he once called aloud to Luther, to the amusement of the company, "If the country folk heard this, they would stone you." It is worthy of remark, that amongst the audience were three men destined to be eminent witnesses to evangelical truth in their subsequent career, Bucer, Brentz, and Snepf, who in this disputation were favoured for the first time with a ray of Gospel light. Luther had brought a letter of recommendation from the Elector to the Count Palatine Wolfgang, by whom he was received with great cordiality. He presented the letter to the Master of the Court, James Semler, who exclaimed on reading it, "Indeed you *have* got a letter of

1518. recommendation!"* and he and his friends were invited to a repast by the Count, and enjoyed a most agreeable conversation with their host, eating and drinking, and viewing everything worthy of sight in Heidelberg Castle. He did not return home on foot, but was conveyed at the expense of the different Augustine convents on the line of road.

At Erfurth he wrote a letter to his old University tutor, Jodocus Trutvetter. "You know," he said, "what able men we have at Wittenberg; Carlstadt, Amsdorf, Schurf, Wolfgang, the two Feldkirchens, and Peter Lupin. They all agree with me in the matter of indulgences: so does the whole University, with the exception of the Licentiate Sebastian; so do our Elector and Ordinary, and many Prelates besides, and all respectable citizens." The letter was followed by an interview between the former pupil and tutor; and Luther endeavoured, but in vain, to persuade Jodocus, that "unless the canons, decretals, scholastic theology, philosophy and logic, then in fashion, were entirely done away with, and the study of the Bible and the Fathers revived, the Church could never be reformed." On the Sunday evening after Ascension day Luther re-entered Wittenberg. Wherever he had been known during his journeys he had been an object of attraction to the curious. The expedition had been of benefit to his health; and it was remarked that he had gained in flesh and strength.

On the 22nd of May he wrote to the Bishop of Brandenburg, and enclosed his "Solutions," which were now finished, but not yet sent to the press. He had been forced, he stated, into the line of conduct which he had pursued in the affair of the indulgences, for his opinion had been asked again and again on the strange doctrines set forth by the commissaries,

* Dicens suâ Neckarenâ linguâ—ihr habt by Gott einen kystlichen credentz. De Wette, I. p. 111.

and he had for a long while forborne replying, until it was 1518.
evident that the reverence due to the Pontiff and the Church was in jeopardy. He entreated his Reverend Father to take the pen and strike out whatever displeased him in the "Solutions," or even to burn them altogether. The reply of his Diocesan must have been favourable; for on the 30th May he addressed a letter to Staupitz, enclosing the "Solutions" in manuscript, and a letter to Leo himself, both of which he requested the Vicar-General to transmit for him to his Holiness. He reminded Staupitz of the conversations which had passed between them in the Erfurth monastery; how he had received his "dearest father's" words as a voice from heaven, when he declared that the hatred of sin must begin with the love of God, and of holiness. "That declaration clung to his heart like the sharp arrow of the mighty: and reading Scripture in the new light thus vouchsafed, he found all harmony, everything seemed to smile and leap up, as it were, to welcome the true doctrine. And that word once inexpressibly bitter to him, Repentance, became most sweet, when he read its meaning, not only in books, but in the wounds of the beloved Saviour."

The letter to Leo, after stating how he had been induced to avail himself, on the subject of indulgences, of that right of public disputation which his Holiness accorded to the Universities on far more momentous topics, and after alluding to the unexpected celebrity which his propositions had attained, obscure and enigmatical as they were (and had I known, he said, that they would have run over almost the whole earth,* I would have made them much plainer), concluded with the humble surrender of himself and his cause to the Pontiff. "I lay myself prostrate at the feet of your Holiness, with all

* "In omnem terram pœne exierint."

1518. I have and am. Grant me life or slay me, call or recall, approve or disapprove, as may please you. I will receive your voice as that of Christ presiding and speaking in you. If I have deserved death, I do not refuse to die; for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. Blessed be his name for ever! Amen. And may he preserve you to all eternity."

The agitation against "Friar Martin," far from declining, was increasing in vehemence amongst the indulgence-merchants, the inquisitors of heresy, and the extreme Papist party. How could it be otherwise when the value of indulgences as a commodity was nearly spoilt?* James Hochstraten, the Dominican inquisitor of Louvain, called upon Leo to rise up with a lion's fury against the heretic monk, and destroy him without further delay. "Whatever is contrary to Scripture," said Hochstraten, "is heretical." Luther replied in a brief letter, but in terms of greater severity than he had previously used, and particularly addressed himself to the inquisitor's definition of heresy. "David's adultery was against Scripture, therefore David was a heretic. Every sin is against Scripture, therefore the whole world is in heresy. The Church is heretical. Arise, O Leo, most gentle pastor, and make inquisition upon your heretical inquisitors by other inquisitors, for they prove your Holiness and the whole Church to be heretical. No," he continued, "a person may be in great error, yet is he not a heretic unless he pertinaciously asserts and defends his error. Now the Pope has not been found in any great error, nor has he pertinaciously clung to any error, great or small. Go, wretch, blood-stained parricide, thou who thirsteth for thy brother's blood, make inquisition for beetles in their own filth, until you can comprehend the distinction between sin, error, and heresy. Thou bloody

* Cochlæus, p. 8. "Rarescebant manus largientium."

man! thou enemy to truth. If your fury urges you again 1518.
to attempt anything against me, be cautious to act with judgment and consideration. God knows what I shall do, if I live."

The adversaries who had risen up against Luther, instead of injuring, had in fact benefited his cause. Maimburg the Jesuit states that it was senseless in Prierias to throw back the question on the infallibility of the Pontiff, and that in Rome itself his opinions were regarded as ultra. It is certain that neither the learning nor the ability of the Master of the Palace was of a high order. The attack made upon Luther by Hochstraten sounded like the howl of the executioner for his victim. The interference of Eck, who had both erudition and talent, in the controversy, had been purchased by a dishonourable breach of friendship, and wore very much the guise of personal rivalry. All these circumstances weighed upon the Elector's mind, and disposed him more and more favourably towards his Professor; and this disposition was greatly increased by the reputation which Luther enjoyed, the avidity and admiration with which his writings were received, and the consent of the whole University, and of all good men, with the sentiments which he had proclaimed. But, out of Germany, the indulgence party were able to carry everything their own way. How could Italy endure that Germany should deny her those large sums of money of which she had drained Europe, and Germany especially, like a subject province, for centuries, on the pretence of some cleverly-invented lies? Besides, the Thomist faction was very powerful at the Vatican, and, supported out of doors by Italian jealousy, Italian avarice, and everywhere by the monkish inquisitorial section before combined against Reuchlin, and by all those who were conscious of a vested interest in the permanence of ignorance, bigotry, and extortion, could almost dictate to the Pontiff

1518. how he was to act. Luther felt all this; and, anxious to prepare the people for the blow which he well knew the Court of Rome had already struck against him, preached on the 15th July on the force and meaning of ecclesiastical excommunication. "This," he said, "was of two kinds, just as the Church itself was in one sense the body of true believers only, and in another sense the society of professing Christians. From the real Church of Christ no soul could be cut off but by his own sin. The visible Church, however, could excommunicate, and might err in its sentence; but even in such a case its chastisement was to be patiently borne as the rod of a mother; and thus patiently to endure an unjust punishment without receding from the path of duty, 'which is yet more requisite than patient endurance,' would convert the undeserved correction to a blessing. Although Annas and Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod, might be in chief authority in the visible Church, the example of Christ himself taught the obligation of paying them reverence." The sermon was followed by a series of theses, proposed for public disputation, on the same subject; but here a messenger from the Bishop of Brandenburg interposed, requesting that the disputation might be deferred, and Luther immediately obeyed.*

About three weeks after the sermon on excommunication, Luther received a citation from the Papal Fiscal to appear within sixty days at Rome, to answer the charge of heresy, before Jerome, Bishop of Asculum, and Sylvester Prierias, Master of the Palace. He immediately wrote to Spalatin, who was at Augsburg in attendance upon the Elector during
Aug. 8. the sitting of the Diet, in these words: "My dear Spalatin, I am now in the greatest need of your help; nay, the honour of the whole University requires it. The favour I implore is,

* De Wette, I. p. 130.

that you will petition our illustrious Prince and Pfeffinger, 1518.
that our Prince and the Emperor will obtain a transfer or remission of my cause for trial in Germany. I have written to this effect to our Prince. I see how treacherously and maliciously the homicide preachers are compassing my ruin. There is not a moment for delay; for the time prescribed is very short, as you will see by the enclosed citation. Read it with all its hydras and portents. If you love me and hate iniquity, make speed in the matter, and signify our Prince's pleasure to me, or rather to our Vicar-General Staupitz, who must ere this have reached Augsburg. In conclusion, I entreat you not to be moved or distressed on my account. The Lord will make a way of escape."

The Elector also had received a letter from the Cardinal St. George, in which it was hinted that Frederic's fidelity to the Holy See had fallen under suspicion, and that, to re-instate himself in the esteem of the Church, it was trusted he would cease protecting his rebellious friar. It was an anxious moment for Luther. Rome was that giant's cave strewn with bones and stained with blood, the vestibule of which showed many entering but no retiring footprints. His safety at this period, to human eyes, turned upon the decision of Frederic; but there was every reason to believe, from the goodwill of Spalatin and Pfeffinger, and the firmness and discrimination of the Elector himself, that the support so much required would not prove wanting in this hour of extremity.

The danger which was visibly hanging over his head did not for an instant repress Luther's zeal for truth. Just at this crisis, his "Solutions" were given to the world. He declared in them that "the Pope's power was not different in kind from that of any other priest, but only in quantity, as extending over the parish of the whole Church." Absolution, he affirmed, was never valid unconditionally; but "the faith-

1518. ful received exactly in proportion to their faith, not on account of the Pope's or priest's declaration, but by virtue of Christ's promise;" the use of absolution being simply to comfort the weak in faith, assure them of the truth of God's word; *i e.*, work faith in faith. "He questioned the entire doctrine of the merits of saints, for he did not believe that any mere human being ever had done or ever could do a work of supererogation." Of purgatory he averred that it was "not a workshop for paying the satisfaction of guilt," but a place in which souls neither without faith nor yet perfect in faith, in whom the new man was not completely formed, by conviction of sin and repentance, matured in faith, hope, and charity. God was not a merchant or an usurer who could not forgive without the payment of compensation money. And indulgences were not an acquittance from purgatory, nor from a holy life, nor from deeds of mercy and charity, but simply from the canonical penance. To Leo personally he was most complimentary; but he called Rome "that veritable Babylon," and pitied a good pontiff in such a den of Satan. Then, with increasing boldness: "I care little for what may merely please or displease the Pope. He is a man like others. I listen to the Pope as Pope; that is, when he speaks in the Canons, or agreeably to the Canons, or determines in conjunction with a Council; but not when he speaks according to his own head. Otherwise, I shall be compelled to say, with some who know little of Christ, that the horrible spillings of Christian blood by Julius II. were the blessings of a gentle pastor bestowed on Christ's fold." His courage rose yet higher as his zeal waxed warmer. "I will speak out in a few words, and boldly. The Church must be reformed. And it is the work not of one man, as the Pope, nor many, as the Cardinals; but for the whole world, or rather for God alone. The time of such a Reformation He only knows. Meanwhile

our vices are patent beyond denial. The keys are put to the 1518.
service of avarice and ambition. The torrent has received an impetus which we cannot stay."

As soon as the "Solutions" were in the hands of the public, he employed his pen in answering the "most sylvestrian Dialogue" of Sylvester Prierias, "that sweetest man," who he had now discovered was a matter-of-fact existence and was "at once his adversary and his judge." The answer was written in the space of two days and was soon in print. "I know the Church," Luther said, "virtually only in Christ, representatively only in a Council. If whatever your virtual Church, *i. e.* the Pope does, must needs be the act of the Church, what enormities must be reckoned among the Church's acts! The bloodsheddings of Julius II., the tyrannies of Boniface VIII., who, as the saying runs, 'came in like a fox, reigned like a lion, and died like a dog!'" He proceeded to declare an extension of his doctrine in regard to the power of the keys—"In those words of Christ, 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, &c.,' no privilege is given to Peter. The words are an irrefragable law, given not to Peter only, but to all priests, and not to priests only, but to every Christian." This was indeed laying the axe to the root of sacerdotalism. In reply to the cavil of Prierias, that if, as Luther had stated, Repentance was the work for all life long, it would be an impossibility, he said, "The admonition is not 'Do penance,' as a false translation renders it, but 'Be converted or changed in heart.' Of course such true repentance must ever be in its perfect form and extent an impossibility on earth: but every real Christian is engaged in the mortification of sin each day and each moment. A sacramental penance every moment of the day would be an absurdity. But the real Christian in his most ordinary acts, whether he eats or drinks, does all to the glory of God. He lives to God

1518. and dies to God. Even in sleeping he obeys God's will, and to obey God's will, that is repentance. How can you or any one dare to assert that the believer in Christ when asleep is void of good acts and the work of repentance cannot be going on in him? On the contrary, he is then the fullest of good acts, when he suffers God placidly to act in him, and enjoys a Sabbath in the Lord." But it was not to be expected that Luther's scriptural profundity would meet with any corresponding quality in Prierias; and this "answer" only elicited fresh effusions of ignorance and vanity from the Master of the Palace.

In the meantime the deliberations of the Diet were proceeding at Augsburg. Two subjects more particularly engaged attention: the threatened invasion of Germany by Sultan Selim, who had already overrun Armenia, Egypt, and Syria; and the demand of Maximilian that his grandson should be elected King of the Romans during his own lifetime. The Elector of Saxony acted his usual independent part in the Diet; and from the great influence which he possessed from his high moral character and reputation for wisdom, was enabled to carry matters according to his wishes. He would not allow the papal legate, Cardinal Cajetan, to extract more money from Germany on the pretence of a Turkish war; but in resistance to such a demand ten grievances of Germany against Rome were delivered in writing to the Emperor, amongst which Indulgences and Tenths for a war never waged, were the eighth and ninth enumerated.* And he succeeded in overthrowing Maximilian's policy, to have the reversion to the empire secured to his grandson against the fundamental laws of the constitution. But this latter service to the constitutional cause was also a great boon to the

* Walch. XV. p. 550.

Pontiff, and outweighed the incivility of refusing the tenths: 1518.
as there was nothing which St. Peter's successor dreaded more sincerely than the union of half the sceptres of Europe in one hand.

The Emperor and the Elector both wrote to the Pontiff from Augsburg. Maximilian, chagrined at the disappointment of his schemes, denounced Martin Luther, hinting that the rebellious monk had found numerous defenders and patrons among the powerful. Whatever the Apostolic See might determine in the matter, the Emperor, in his profound reverence for the Vicar of Christ, would rejoice to carry into effect. And he trusted the Pontiff would restrain "wordy disputations after the scholastic fashion," which many grave authorities disapproved, and "the lawfulness of which was questioned in an ancient decree of the pontifical Senate." Frederic on his part, in replying to the Cardinal St. George, began with expressing his submission to the Holy See; touched on personal matters; and passed on to Doctor Martin Luther, whose writings and sermons he denied that he had ever taken upon him to defend, "nor would he do so now." But he had been informed that Dr. Luther was willing, "under a safe-conduct," to submit his tenets to the examination of "just, courteous, impartial, and learned judges." In conclusion, he mentioned his brother Elector and friend the Archbishop of Treves, as a very fit person to be entrusted with the management of the case. The Elector also addressed the imperial secretary through Spalatin, stating that Dr. Luther was willing to submit the points in dispute to the decision of any of the German Universities, excepting Erfurth, Leipsic, and Frankfort on the Oder. The University of Wittenberg also warmly took up the cause of their most distinguished Professor; and in a letter to Charles von Miltitz,

1518. the German Chamberlain of the Pontiff, spoke of Luther's "various and almost extraordinary erudition, of his simple and unadulterate manners;" and in a letter to Leo himself, alluded to his feeble health, which rendered him quite unequal to a journey to Rome, and affirmed that his religious teaching had always enjoyed a most orthodox repute at Wittenberg, and still did so. Not a stone was left unturned to prevent the remission of the cause to Rome; and Luther himself suggested that, if the case could not be tried in Germany, the Elector should save him from certain death by refusing his safe-conduct.

But the power of Rome was far from being equal to her malice: in her complicated system one wheel was a check upon another; and as political considerations weighed with her more than religious, it seemed the direct reverse of good policy, in the present prospects of Europe, to break with such an influential Elector as Frederic. Leo therefore, probably with less reluctance than his courtiers, consented to a change of proceedings. "We have heard," he wrote to Frederic, "from many most learned and religious men, and particularly from our beloved son the Master of the Sacred Palace, that Martin Luther has dared to assert and maintain publicly many impious and heretical tenets. We have therefore cited him to answer these charges before our beloved son Thomas, Cardinal St. Sixti, Legate de Latere of the Holy See, a man versed in all theology and philosophy, who will decide what he must do." The epistle concluded with an admonition to the Elector to keep the splendour of his family, of such saintly repute, unsullied by the calumny which had assailed him of protecting a heretic.* This new arrangement was a

* Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 181.

great compliment to the Elector of Saxony, who had himself 1518.
requested the Cardinal to apply to the Vatican for the remission of the cause to his judgment; a suit which Cajetan had willingly undertaken, in order, by his success in reconciling Luther to the Church, to repair the failure of his endeavours in regard to the tenths. On the one part, the Cardinal de Vio promised the Elector that he would treat his monk with paternal gentleness; on the other, Frederic engaged that Dr. Martin should appear before the Legate without fail at Augsburg. But such a fatality attended all the measures of Rome, that by this concession to Frederic she was involved in a transparent contradiction. By a new brief, dated the 23rd August, it was given out that the accused friar Martin had already been condemned as a heretic, and that the Cardinal St. Sixti was commissioned to force and compel him to appear in his presence, if he proved unwilling to do so, and to keep him in custody until the papal pleasure should be known; or, if he voluntarily appeared before him, in that case treating him as a heretic already condemned, either to absolve him on his retractation; or, if he would not retract, to lay an interdict on the dominions of any potentate, as long as the refractory heretic might remain in them, and for three days afterwards, the Emperor alone excepted. This brief was kept as snug as could be from all curious eyes: but that of course could be only for a time, although Rome trusted sufficiently long for her purpose to have been answered; and when it afterwards fell into Luther's hands, he published it with this comment: —"The date of this brief is the 23rd August: but I had been cited only on the 7th August, an interval of sixteen days. The sixty days allowed me, beginning from the 7th August, would terminate about the 7th October. It is forsooth the custom and style of the Roman Curia to cite, admonish, judge, condemn, and publish the sentence all at once, whilst

1518. the culprit is leagues away, and knows nothing of the matter!"*

However, the citation to the Reformer to appear at Augsburg before the Legate threw his friends into the utmost consternation. Some wrote to dissuade him from compliance: every where it was feared open violence or dangerous guile would track his footsteps: and even in his own language, "to go to Augsburg was to tempt God." But he never thought of recoiling from the path of duty. "You know my spiritual conflicts," he wrote to Staupitz, "they are so great that I think nothing of these earthly momentary trials." But Staupitz was overcome with anxiety for his dear Martin. "Come to me," he wrote to Luther, "let us live and die together: the world is exasperated against Christ, and the sentence against you is at the door."

Before Luther started on his journey he welcomed to the University Philip Melancthon, whom the Elector had appointed Professor of Greek. Philip Schwarzerd or Melancthon was the son of a master armourer of Bretten; but his father was dead: his mother Barbara who was still living was the daughter of John Reuter a magistrate of Bretten, a woman of some poetical talent and an excellent mother. Melancthon was a protegé of Reuchlin, and had received when a boy from that eminent scholar the present of a Greek Grammar and a Bible. He was only twenty-two years of age when he was called to the chair of Greek literature at Wittenberg, and had already lectured in the University of Tubingen. His personal appearance, for his features were mean, and his stature low, his

* Luther also declared that this brief was of German workmanship, sent from Germany to Rome, and having there received the approbation of some magnates, sent back again to Germany. Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 92.

† Letter of Staupitz, dated Sept. 14. See Seckend. I. p. 44.

manners shy and diffident, belied his attainments and talents. 1518.
But on the 29th August he delivered his inaugural lecture with such learning and terseness that Luther and the other Professors were overjoyed. "We have indeed an acquisition in our Greek Professor," Luther wrote to Spalatin; "I only hope his tender frame will not resent our spare diet, and shift to better fare at Leipsic, whither he has been invited. Pfeffinger is too close a guardian of our Prince's purse.* As long as I have Melancthon I want no better tutor in Greek." But even Luther was only partly conscious of the treasure which he had found; and had yet to learn that Melancthon's mental and moral qualities, added to his own, made up the complement of a Reformer.

On the 28th September Luther reached Weimar on his road to Augsburg, and lodged in the convent of the Bare-footed Friars, where he was beheld for the first time by Myconius, even then in heart a disciple to the doctrines of the Reformation. "My dear Doctor," Myconius relates, one of the fraternity exclaimed, in his compassion for the persecuted "Brother Martin," "the Italians are clever people; you will never defend your cause against them: they will burn you." "Dear friend," Luther answered, "pray to our dear God and his dear Son Christ, whose cause it is, to uphold it for me."† From Weimar he pursued his route, still on foot, to Nuremberg, where he borrowed of his old friend and brother monk, Wenceslaus Link, a monk's frock to appear in before the Legate, for his own was sore worn with age and the toils of the journey: and he had the advantage of the company of Link and another brother friar, by name Leonard, for the rest of

* It was chiefly through Pfeffinger that the Elector laid himself open to Luther's jest—"Our Prince receives with the bushel, and measures out with the spoon."

† Walch. XV. p. 672.

1518. the road. But when they were within a few leagues of their destination, Luther, who was extremely weary with travelling on foot, was seized with violent pains in the stomach; and his two comrades were obliged to procure a waggon, in which they laid him, and in this state, on the evening of Friday the 8th October, he was conveyed into Augsburg.

The next morning Luther was much better: the night's rest had wonderfully restored him. The Diet was over; Augsburg was deserted, the only strangers in it being the Legate and his followers, and Luther himself and his two brother friars. Luther's first act was to send Link and Leonard to inform Cardinal Cajetan of his arrival. The Elector had supplied the Reformer with letters of recommendation to several of his own friends in Augsburg: and the following day these called upon him, and with great warmth entered into his cause. They were Peutenger and Langenmantel, both imperial councillors, the two brothers Adelmann, who were canons; and with them was a Doctor Auerback, of Leipsic. They came into the room just after the orator Urbanus von Serra Longa,* one of the Legate's followers, had left it with the intention of preparing the Legate for the interview, and of shortly returning to conduct Luther to his presence. Hearing what had passed they remarked, "Of course you have a safe-conduct?" Luther had not thought of a safe-conduct: but they assured him that he must by no means venture into the presence of the Nuncio until it had been procured, for without it there could be no guarantee for his personal safety, and they were only surprised that he should have entered Augsburg without such a safeguard. The Cardinal, they said, would be outwardly full of mildness, but in heart was most bitter against him. They quitted the

* See Spalatin's relation, Walch. XV. p. 675.

apartment; and Serra Longa shortly afterwards returned, and 1518.
was clamorous when he heard of Luther's resolution not to proceed to the interview until he had been furnished with a safe-conduct. "Why," said the wily Italian, "you are making an easy and simple matter into a long and tiresome one. The Legate is an Italian; it will not do for you to argue with him: but he will behave towards you with paternal gentleness; and three syllables, just six letters, 'Revoco,' will settle the whole business." Luther answered that he had made up his mind to wait until a safe-conduct should have been granted. "What!" rejoined the Italian, "it cannot be your intention not to revoke: do you imagine that any princes or lords will protect you against the Holy See? What support can you have? Where will you remain?" "I shall still have heaven," Luther answered. But the Italian's chattering continued: he spoke of the Abbot Joachim of Florance, who had revoked, and therefore had been pronounced no heretic; of the Pope's word being law: all in vain; for Luther remained resolute. "What would you do," asked the Italian, "if you had the Pope and the Cardinals in your power?" "I would treat them," Luther replied, "with the utmost respect and reverence." Serra Longa made his grimaces, bit his finger, muttered "hem;" and returned to the Legate.

In this interval Luther wrote on Monday, the 11th October, to Melancthon; and first alluded to his having engaged John Bossenstein as Hebrew lecturer at Wittenberg, and then adverted to the topic of pressing interest:—"I find Augsburg rife with the rumour of my name: every one must have a peep at the Herostratus who has kindled such a fire. Do you play the man, and instruct our students rightly. I go to be sacrificed for you and for them, if it please God. I had rather perish, and lose your delightful society, the greatest loss

1518. I should sustain, than revoke the truth and injure the noblest studies. Italy is plunged in Egyptian darkness; its ignorance of Christ and the things of Christ is total. Yet, these are our lords and masters in faith and morals; and the curse of God is thus fulfilled—'Children are their oppressors, and women rule over them.'"

Probably before this letter had been written the safe-conduct had arrived, having been easily procured from the Emperor on the Cardinal's tacit permission;* and on Tuesday
Oct. 12. Luther proceeded, accompanied by his friends, his host, the Prior of St. Anne, and Link and Leonard, to his first interview with the Legate. He was careful to comply with the directions which Serra Longa had given him as to the customary formalities upon approaching a prince of the Roman Church; he threw himself prostrate at the feet of the Legate, and waited his permission to rise. After these ceremonials a pause ensued; the Cardinal was awaiting the monk's abject recantation. Finding that he was expected to speak, Luther broke the silence by craving pardon of "his most reverend lord," if he had done or spoken anything rashly, and professing his readiness to be instructed and guided to sounder views. Cajetan in reply, with paternal clemency, commended and congratulated him on his humility, and stated that he only required three things: that he would retrace his wanderings, and return to his sober senses; that he would promise obedience for the future; and that he would abstain from whatever might tend to disturb the peace of the Church. Luther begged permission to see the papal brief, but the Legate, with a waive of the hand, signified that he could not accede to such a request. "Most reverend father," Luther then answered, "deign to point out to me in what I have erred." Cajetan

* De Wette, I. p. 143. Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 196. Seckend. I. p. 4.

turned to the seventh proposition of the ninety-five theses :— 1518.
"Observe, you state that no one can receive the grace of the Sacraments without faith; and moreover, in your fifty-eighth proposition, you assert that the treasure of indulgences does not consist of the merits and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now this is contrary to the extravagant (Unigenitus) of Clement VI. You must revoke both these errors and embrace the true doctrine of the Church." "In regard to faith in the Sacrament being requisite to its validity, that," said Luther, "is a truth I never can and never will revoke." "Whether you will or no," returned the Legate, "I must have your recantation this very day, or for this one error I shall condemn all your propositions." The Cardinal had promised to convict the poor friar of error by warrant of Scripture; but he did not adduce a word of Scripture, but reiterated in proof of the opus operatum doctrine of Rome, statements of doctors and councils. "Most reverend father, I ask for Scripture," Luther said; "it is on Scripture my views are based;" and he quoted several texts. "Oh," interrupted the Legate laughing, "he is speaking of faith in general." "No, most reverend father, not of faith in general, but that the Sacraments of Christ are of no efficacy without faith." They dropped this subject for the time, and came to the question of indulgences. Luther affirmed that he had read both the extravagant of Clement VI. and the analogous extravagant of Sixtus IV., but placed little reliance on them, inasmuch as they wrested the plain sense of Holy Scripture, and were merely reproductions of the notions of Thomas Aquinas. The Legate was much offended. "Do you not know," he said, "that the Pope is above all?" "Not above Scripture." "Yes, above Scripture; the Pope," continued the Legate, "is above Scripture and above Councils; why, he abolished the Council of Basle." Luther introduced the

1518. mention of the University of Paris. "And with its merited punishment," exclaimed the Cardinal, "will that rebellious University be visited; Gerson and all Gersonists are to be condemned." "Who," Luther enquired, "are the Gersonists?" But here the Legate intimated that he should not continue the subject; and on Luther's requesting a day for deliberation, replied, that "he should not dispute with him, but must have a revocation, and would give him one day for reflection." After the usual ceremonials of respect, the Reformer withdrew; but, as he passed through the courtyard, he was assailed with abuse and a sophistical argument by the Cardinal's master of the ceremonies, who had hardly restrained his vehemence in the Legate's presence, and had run after the heretic to give vent to it. Luther unriddled the sophistry with a stinging sarcasm, and the courtier slunk back to his friends.*

On his return to the convent of the Carmelites, where he lodged, Luther, to his great delight, found the Vicar-General of the Augustine Order awaiting him. It was at once communicated to Staupitz that the Cardinal demanded a naked recantation, would not vouchsafe any scriptural proof of doctrine, but only cited the decretals and the Schoolmen. It was agreed that Luther should commit to writing a mild and humble, but firm protest against this treatment of the Legate, which was directly in the teeth of his own promise. And the next day, with protest in hand, Luther proceeded to his second interview with the Cardinal, accompanied by a more numerous body of friends than on the day previous, by the Vicar-General, four imperial councillors, amongst them Peutinger and the Dean of Trent, two electoral councillors, Ruel, a lawyer, and the knight Philip von Feilitzsch, and a notary

* Spalatin's relation—Walch. XV. p. 682.

and witnesses. The Italian party had also been reinforced in 1518.
the interim, for the Prior of the Dominicans, who had been reconciled to Cajetan, as Herod to Pilate, by the bond of a strong common enmity, was found seated beside the Cardinal.

After the customary obeisance Luther read his protest to the following effect:—"I protest that I honour and follow the holy Roman Church in all my words and deeds, present, past, and future. And if anything may have been said, contrary or otherwise, I wish it unsaid, and so account it. I have only sought truth in my disputations, and cannot relinquish that search, much less retract anything before I have been heard, and convicted of error. I know that I am but a man, and liable to err. I have therefore submitted, and now submit myself to the judgment and determination of the legitimate holy Church, and to all persons my superiors in knowledge. And over and above what may be necessary, I offer myself in person here or elsewhere, to render an account even in public of my words. If this is not agreeable to his most Reverend Lordship, I am ready to answer in writing whatever objection he may produce against me. Moreover, I am ready to submit my theses to the decision of the imperial Universities of Basle, Fribourg, and Louvain, and, if they are not enough, of Paris, from of old ever the most Christian, and in theology the most flourishing University."

The Cardinal listened to this protest with a smile; and then assuming great mildness, entreated him to leave off these senseless counsels, and to return to his sound mind:—"Retract, my son, retract: it is hard for you to kick against the pricks." Luther replied, that he would plead the cause by reference to Scripture alone, and in writing; there had been enough of fencing the day before." The Cardinal was highly offended with what he termed the audacity of such a speech. "My son," he answered, "I have neither fenced

1518. with, nor shall I fence with you; I am not here for such a purpose; but out of the regard I bear to the illustrious Elector Frederic, I am ready with all paternal benignity to hear, admonish, and teach, and, if possible, to reconcile you to the Holy See." * The Cardinal continued his discourse with great volubility, the strain of all his exhortations being that he must have an unconditional revocation. Luther remained perfectly silent: at last Staupitz rose and asked permission for the monk to put his answer in writing. This the Cardinal assented to; and the second conference closed. Luther afterwards observed, in reference to the affront which his language had occasioned, "I ought not to have used the word 'fencing;' † my Latinity was too elegant: I should have said, 'disputing,' for we had really done nothing but dispute the previous day."

Oct. 15. The interval of a day was suffered to elapse, and on Friday the Reformer appeared before the Legate for the third and last time, and deferentially presented his "declaration." "It is most certain," this declaration stated, "that the Pope is not above, but under the authority of the word of God; and I know it to be the uniform doctrine of the whole Church that the merits of Christ in the Spirit cannot be committed to man, nor be transmitted through men, nor by men. How many former decrees of Popes have been corrected by later ones! Panormitanus shows that in matters of faith not only is a General Council above the Pope, but likewise any Christian whatever, if he depend on better authority and reason than the Pope, as did Paul in his argument with

* Pallavicini puts somewhat different words in Cajetan's mouth. I. p. 15.

† Pro disputare digladiari dixeram elegantius.—De Wette, I. p. 181. See Cajetan's letter—Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 195.

Peter.* How can the merits of saints be a treasure, when 1518.
the whole Scripture affirms that God rewards us all far beyond our deserts?" On the subject of faith the "declaration" first dwelt on justification before God by faith alone, then on the necessity of faith to the validity of a Sacrament. "By no disposition are we made meet, by no works meet for the Sacrament, but by faith alone." Scripture, Augustine, and Bernard, were quoted in evidence of this doctrine. And the whole concluded with an appeal to the Cardinal to "reveal to him a truer light, for otherwise he must stand to his assertions, and obey God rather than man;" and he implored the Cardinal to "be his intercessor with Leo not to be rigorous towards a soul desiring only the light of truth."

Cajetan took the "declaration," and, with a look of contempt, pronounced it "mere words"—"a long philactery"—and the quotations from Scripture quite irrelevant; but he would, he said, send the paper to Rome. He was even warmer than he had been two days previously, and reiterated with increased vehemence the old burden of his remarks—"Retract, my son, retract." If he would not retract the theses, at least he urged him to retract the sermon. Luther remained calm, silent, and immoveable under the storm of the Cardinal's volubility. At last, in a determined tone, he said—"Most reverend father, I *will* retract, if you can prove by the extravagant of Pope Clement that the treasure of indulgences is the very merit of Christ." The Legate seized the volume with a look of triumph, and puffing with impatience and eagerness to confute his challenger, turned to the passage, and read aloud—"The Lord Jesus Christ has acquired this treasure by his merits." The eyes of the Italians, who thronged the apartment during each interview, sparkled with

* Gal. ii.

1518. malicious delight; and Luther's friends feared that he was entrapped by his boldness. But with unchanged countenance he answered—"Most worthy father, if the Lord Jesus Christ has acquired a treasure by his merits, that is no evidence that the treasure and the merits are the same." The feelings of all in the room were in a moment changed; and the Legate, anxious to divert attention from the flaw in his argument, with ready effrontery turned to another topic, and resumed his vociferation and demand of an unqualified retractation. But Luther, perfectly awake to the advantage he had obtained, was not to be so put off.—"Most reverend father, you must not suppose that we Germans know nothing of grammar."* Cajetan's irritation now exceeded all bounds; he rose from his chair, and in a voice of thunder repeated, "Retract;" and at last, "Retract, or never appear in my presence again." Luther requested that the "declaration" might be forwarded to the Pope with his most humble prayers, and making a profound obeisance withdrew.

After dinner a messenger waited on the Vicar-General from the Cardinal, to solicit his immediate attendance. Staupitz was of course aware what this meant; and before obeying the summons released Luther from the vow of obedience to his Order, which was likely to prove as important for Luther as for the Vicar-General and the Order itself in the subsequent efforts of Rome to shake his constancy. But Luther felt this to be a moment of trial, and was ever afterwards wont to call his exclusion from his Order his "first excommunication." Staupitz found Cajetan recovered from his recent agitation and more calm than ordinarily. "I no longer," he said to Staupitz, "regard Martin as a heretic: indeed I love him; he has no greater friend than myself." He proceeded to

* See Ruel's account—Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 185. De Wette, I. p. 181.

request Staupitz, using that authority with which he was 1518.
invested as Vicar-General, to point out to Martin the errors he was labouring under, and the heinous guilt of setting himself in opposition to the decrees of the Church. Staupitz answered, that "Brother Martin" was his superior in acquaintance with the Scriptures and in ability. The Cardinal persisted in such arguments as he thought would induce Staupitz to use his influence and authority with Luther for his recantation. With some insight probably into the character of the Vicar-General, he touched upon the penalties to which he would render himself liable by in any way upholding or not disclaiming Martin's errors: on the other hand, he engaged that, if the monk would retract, the act should be attended by no disgrace or opprobrium whatever. "He meant," (Luther afterwards commented on these words,) "that that eternal disgrace would attend it, which never leaves those who act against truth and their conscience." Link likewise had an interview with the Cardinal, and found him in the same conciliatory mood, and full of gentle expressions towards Luther. It may be questionable what exact part Staupitz and Link were induced by the plausible and mild demeanour of the Cardinal to take in their arguments with Luther at this crisis. If Cajetan's own statement may be believed, they approved his proposals for an amicable accommodation, to avoid the necessity of referring the matter to Rome. At least they prevailed on Luther to address a most humble and deferential letter to the Cardinal, which he composed on Sunday the 17th October. The letter began by stating that his dearest father in Christ, John Staupitz, had implored him to act humbly, to give up his own opinion, and submit his own will; and that Wenceslaus Link, his fellow-student from his earliest years, had joined in the same entreaty. "I confess," he continued, "O reverend father in Christ, as I

1518. have often confessed at other times, that I have been indiscreet, too bitter and irreverent towards the Pontiff. And although I was strongly provoked to this irreverence, yet I now perceive that my duty bound me to handle the matter with more modesty and humility and deference, and not to answer a fool so as to become like him. I sincerely grieve, and ask pardon, and am willing to proclaim this my confession from the pulpit, which I have done at other times when I have been guilty of an offence; and I will speak of indulgences no more, if my adversaries also will forbear. But I cannot retract my doctrines, for that would be against my conscience; I ask for the decision of the Church, and to be convinced by better reason. I long to be worthy to hear the voice of the bride, for she must hear the voice of the bridegroom. Even if I should revoke without conviction in my conscience, what would such a revocation be worth? It would only be said that I had at first assented, and then revoked, without knowing wherefore or what I assented or revoked."

To this letter Cajetan did not vouchsafe any reply; and it was generally believed that his feelings were not quite so kindly towards Luther as his words would imply. Even Staupitz received a proof of this, if the relation be correct, that he urged it upon the Cardinal to have another interview with "Brother Martin:" when Cajetan, thrown off his guard by his repugnance to the proposal, exclaimed, "I will not speak with the beast again: he has deep eyes; and his head is full of speculations."* But it was commonly inquired, "Why this delay? What is the Cardinal meditating?" Rumour spoke much of Italian artifice and Italian revenge. It was known that the Legate had boasted that he was em-

* Myconius—Walch. XV. p. 714.

powered to throw Staupitz and Luther into prison; and the very silence which surrounded him and his hive of attendants seemed to public apprehension to bode no good. A negotiation might already be on foot between the Cardinal and the Emperor, who it was known was hunting in the neighbourhood; and the result might be the imperilling of the Reformer's safety in a multiplicity of ways. In this state of uncertainty Monday passed and Tuesday. No message was received from the Cardinal, and nothing was heard of him beyond surmises. Luther and his friends were of opinion that no time was to be lost, and matured their plans for his immediate flight. The next morning, Wednesday the 20th October, before daybreak, he sallied forth through the dim and untrodden streets of Augsburg on a horse procured from Staupitz, but without a horseman's arms or accoutrements, under the conduct of an aged guide whom one of his friends had engaged as a trustworthy person to attend him. In this plight he reached a small low gate in the city walls, which a friendly hand, by the contrivance of the Senator Langenmantel,* unlocked, and let Luther and his guide pass into the open country. He had before hesitated in what direction to pursue his flight, and had at one time contemplated escaping to France, for the envoy of the French monarch at the recent Diet had mentioned him favourably; but he had relinquished that idea, and turned his horse's head towards Wittenberg. He rode only eight miles the first day; but when he dismounted in the stable of the hostelry, he fell down on the straw overcome with anxiety and fatigue. On reaching Nuremberg he saw for the first time the papal commission to Cajetan and was filled with thankfulness to God, who had delivered him from the dangers which had environed him. He entered Wittenberg in safety 1518.

* Seckend. I. p. 49.

1518. on the Eve of All Saints' day—a memorable anniversary; but there was no longer, as the year before, a crowd of pilgrims wending their way to the Castle Church.

Meanwhile the friends who had attended him at Augsburg had likewise quitted that city, and were dispersed in different spots. Staupitz, on whose fears the Cardinal's implied threats left a lasting impression, disappeared almost as mysteriously as Luther, without, as the Legate complained, even bidding adieu to his host. Link had returned to Nuremburg; Brother Leonard, it seems, was left behind for a day or two to present the appeal which Luther had duly made before witnesses previous to his flight. And shortly afterwards John Frosch, the prior of the Carmelites, paid a visit to Wittenberg, where his hospitality to Luther at Augsburg was requited with the best cheer the Augustine convent could yield or Luther procure, by begging venison and eatables of all kinds from Spalatin.

The directions of Luther had been to place his "appeal" in the hands of the Cardinal as well as to affix it in public: but no one durst enter Cajetan's presence on such an errand, and even placarding the "appeal" in public seemed to involve considerable hazard. The notary to whom this latter duty had been assigned was warned by one whom Luther, as he states, had deemed one of his best friends at Augsburg, that imminent danger would attend such an act. The diligence of the Prior, however, conquered this timidity, and the "appeal" was affixed in the market place and on the door of the Cathedral. It bore date the 16th October, and recapitulated Luther's arguments for withstanding the abominable teaching of the indulgence commissioners, complained of the unfairness of committing his cause for judgment to Sylvester Prierias, spoke of the sanguinary reputation of the city of Rome, of Luther's feeble health and extreme poverty as a mendicant,

and insisted on the inconsiderate conduct of Cajetan in demanding an unconditional revocation without deigning to give any proof of error. But Luther had not yet discarded the papal authority, and the style of the document ran thus:—"I appeal from the most holy father the Pope, ill-informed, to the most holy father the Pope Leo X. by name, by the grace of God to be better informed," &c. 1518.

A farewell letter in explanation of his sudden departure had also been addressed by Luther to the Cardinal, to be delivered when he was at a safe distance. In this letter he dwelt on the decisive proofs which he had given of obedience, by travelling so long a journey through so many dangers, although weak in body and very lean in purse. He had thrown himself, he said, and all his, at the feet of his Holiness, and had omitted nothing to demonstrate his submission to the Church. But his longer stay would have been a severe tax on the hospitality of the Carmelites, and the most reverend father had commanded him not to approach his presence without a recantation. He had therefore appealed to the Most Holy Lord Leo X. to be better informed, and he well knew that such an appeal would please the Elector of Saxony far better than a revocation; but in making it he had consulted the judgment of his friends rather than his own, for he had thought it enough that he had before resigned the matter into the hands of the Church, and with the docility of a scholar was waiting her sentence.*

But, although Luther had escaped the immediate perils of Augsburg, his condition could not be regarded under any other light than as most precarious. Cajetan had of course become exasperated, and the Thomist party, of which he was the head, proportionately incensed. His refusal to retract,

* De Wette, I. pp. 164, 165.

1518. and now his flight, were added to the Roman catalogue of his deadly sins. But in reference to the progress of his cause, and the public estimation of his character, the result was widely different. Luther himself declared that all that had been done at Augsburg was to waste time and money. His description of Cajetan's theological acumen was, that it rivalled in excellence the skill of an ass in playing the harp. "Yet," he added, "he is the most learned of the Thomists, and Prierias ranks second! What must the tenth or the hundredth be! The dear God preserve me from being puffed up." But such words themselves afford a confutation of the estimate that nothing had been done at Augsburg. Luther had learnt the deep ignorance of a cardinal of most learned fame in divine things, and the public had become more awakened to the same fact: the affair had passed through another stage, and its adjustment had become more difficult; and the reforming party had acquired greater confidence in Luther himself; and these were all of them important points.

Immediately on his return he resumed the quiet routine of his preaching and lecturing, and proceeded with his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. But on the 19th November Frederic received a letter from the Cardinal St. Sixti, conveying his version of the Augsburg interviews, and imploring the Elector not to sully any longer his name and his house by favouring a heretic, against whom judicial proceedings were in process at Rome, and of whose affairs he himself had now for ever washed his hands. The letter was transmitted almost as soon as received to Luther by his Prince, and drew from the Reformer an admirable answer at some length, in which he corrected the Cardinal's version of the interviews, and showed that Cajetan had quite departed from his promise of convicting him of error from Scripture, and then spoke of the misapplication, so gross that any layman

could at once detect it, much less a prince endued with such 1518.
wisdom as Frederic—of texts of Scripture to support the pretensions of Rome. This doctrinal sequel to a statement of historical facts throws light on the researches of the Reformer in his cell, in this anxious interval, which were directed to the basis on which the papal supremacy rested, which he found more rotten than he had anticipated. And, in strict accordance with the progress of his ecclesiastical enlightenment, Luther drew up another "appeal;" and on Sunday, the 28th November, read it aloud in Corpus Christi Chapel, in the presence of a notary and witnesses. "I appeal," he said, "from the Pontiff as a man liable to error, sin, falsehood, vanity, and other human infirmities, not above Scripture but under Scripture, to a future Council to be legitimately convened in a safe place, so that a proctor deputed by me may have secure access, protected from those snares which daily beset me even in Wittenberg from my adversaries." And this advance must be attributed in part to the influence of the Augsburg discussions upon the direction of his studies, that he now in fact abjured the Pope, and no longer appealed from Leo ill-informed to Leo well-informed, but from the papal authority itself to that of a Council.

But Luther's bold language seemed to mock at the actual dangers of his present situation. What might be the most effectual means of providing for his safety was a problem of very uncertain solution, and he received intimation from the Elector that he must be ready to start for any destination at a moment's notice; and he had further an interview with Spalatin at Lichtenberg upon the subject. At one time a retreat to France was in contemplation: at another a captivity or concealment in one of the Elector's fortresses was even as early as this date suggested; but all was precarious.

1518. "I am ready to go forth," Luther said, "like Abraham, not knowing whither to go; nay, most certainly knowing, for God is everywhere." At last the long expected mandate from Frederic actually arrived, that Luther must be prepared for instant departure; he had everything in readiness, and was only waiting more definite directions, when a second mandate counter-ordered the first; a change of plans resulting, as was afterwards shown, from a change in the policy of Rome, which was bent on making another attempt at amicable adjustment. In this uncertain state Luther bade a conditional farewell to his Wittenberg congregation: a command for him to quit the town might reach him, he told them, at any moment; it would not then be in his power to wish them farewell; he seized the opportunity, therefore, to do so once for all.

All this while the other Professors of Wittenberg were keeping pace with Luther in his scriptural discoveries, or following at no long interval: and the students generally were treading close on the heels of their Professors. The theology of Holy Scripture was at that time studied in the University of Wittenberg under the stimulus of controversy, and the interest natural to the mind in a newly opened source of knowledge, with an ardour and perseverance for which it would be difficult to find a parallel in later times. "Our University," Luther said, "glows with industry like an ant hill." More students were flocking in than accommodation could well be procured for in the town: and the general curiosity was directed to acquiring Hebrew and Greek, the two languages which, like porters, sit at the entrance of the Bible, holding the keys. But Bossenstein, the Hebrew Professor, did not give thorough satisfaction: he thought too much of prosody and minute scholarship, as if, Luther complained, we were

dreaming of becoming Hebrew orators. The rage was to 1518.
know Scripture; and the lectures on Scripture or the early fathers were crowded. This passion passed from the University to the Court—indeed it was pervading Germany—and Spalatin, in his correspondence with Luther, perpetually asked and received expositions of scriptural texts; and behind his secretary's shadow the real querist was often most probably Frederic himself. Luther had delivered a remarkable sermon, perhaps in some measure tentative, in reference to the worship of saints; and the Electoral Secretary enquired if he objected to the worship of saints. "You must not expect me to say much," Luther answered, "about saints or angels: I know only Jesus Christ, and him crucified." But he subsequently explained that his strictures had been levelled, not at the invocation of saints, but the objects for which they were invoked. "St. Lawrence is invoked against fire; St. Sebastian against the plague; Martin and St. Roch against poverty; St. Anne and the blessed Virgin against evils innumerable; St. Valentine against the falling sickness; Job against the scab. How is it that no saint is invoked for chastity, patience, humility, faith, hope, or charity?"

But Luther had no settled conviction that it was Frederic's resolution to protect him against Rome, under the ordeal of the greater trials that must ensue; and he related with avowed satisfaction to Spalatin a conversation which had been reported to him from the table of the Bishop of Brandenburg. "On what does this monk rely," a guest had enquired, "that he dares to assail Rome so courageously? Is it on Erasmus and the literati?" "No," the Bishop himself replied, "the Pope would care little for Erasmus and the literati; the University of Wittenberg and the Elector of Saxony are Martin's stronghold."

At length, however, Frederic spoke out, still in a tone of

1518. moderation, but with so much sincerity as to render his real sentiments no longer dubious. He replied on the 8th December to the Cardinal's letter, which, he said, although dated the 25th October, not having been despatched by a special messenger, had failed to reach him until more than three weeks later. He objected to the Cardinal, that, in his treatment of Luther, he had forgotten his promise to use paternal gentleness and no coercion. The high esteem, he continued, in which Martin was held for his piety and learning was irreconcileable with the charge of heresy: he had been convicted of no error; and his services could not be dispensed with without great detriment to the University of Wittenberg. And Dr. Martin, he believed, had already referred the points in dispute to distinguished Universities, or had offered to maintain his opinions in public disputation. It was evident that the opposition to him arose principally from those who had found his erudition an obstacle to their private emoluments. The reply of Luther to the Cardinal's statement of what had passed at Augsburg was enclosed in this letter, which diffused the liveliest satisfaction in Wittenberg.

It so happened that the very next day after this letter had been despatched, the Reformer's narrative* of the Augsburg interviews found its way into the hands of the public. But the connexion in the dates was only casual. The Elector had sent to request that the publication might be deferred: and Luther would have readily complied; but the avidity of the public and the cupidity of the printers outstripped his caution. To such a height had the popular excitement attained, that the house in which the printing was carried on was beset by a crowd of every rank and age; as each sheet came reeking from the press it was disposed of, and happy was the student or the

* Acta Augustina.

burgher whose hand was the first to seize the prize. In fact 1518.
Luther himself was one of the last to see an impression of his own writing.

The first public act of Rome, in reply to the intelligence of Luther's obstinacy, and Cajetan's failure, was to issue a new decretal, dated the 9th November, which was published on the 13th December following, by the Cardinal Legate himself, at Lintz in Austria,* sanctioning afresh the doctrine of indulgences. It was a proof that Rome felt her authority to be tottering. The edict declared that "the Roman Church, the mother of all Churches," had handed down by tradition that the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter who bore the keys, the Vicar of Christ on earth, by the power of the keys—the office of which is to open by removing impediments from the faithful, that is, by removing the guilt and punishment due for actual sins by indulgence—can for reasonable causes grant to the faithful of Christ, who by the bonds of charity are members of Christ, whether in this life or in purgatory, indulgences out of the superabundance of the merits of Christ and the Saints; can confer the indulgence by absolution, or transfer it by suffrage. And all those who have acquired indulgences, whether alive or dead, are released from so much temporal punishment for their actual sins as is the equivalent of the acquired indulgence. This doctrine is to be held and preached by all, under penalty of excommunication, from which only the Pope can absolve, save at the point of death." But this was a weak decree for bolstering up a failing authority. Indeed, if Rome had been bent upon demonstrating to the world in the most conclusive manner, that all which her adversaries alleged against her was true, she could hardly have hit upon a policy more directly calculated to serve this

* Pallav. I. p. 20. Polanus, I. p. 7.

1518. end than the proclamation of such an edict. It proved to the whole world that Tetzel and the Commissaries were not the only delinquents in the indulgence matter; that Cardinal Cajetan was not alone in his determination to preserve her revenues to the Church, but that the Chief Priest of Christendom himself clutched the money bag with as covetous a gripe as any needy friar, and made his doctrines equally subservient to his emolument. Nor is it difficult to trace the influence of this and other events, accumulating as it were the present upon the past, and adding passing acts to what he was reading in ecclesiastical records, upon the Reformer's mind, as seen in the clear mirror of his correspondence. "His pen," he tells Link at this time, "is teeming with some nobler achievement than he had essayed hitherto:" he had before called Rome Babylon, but now "the conviction is daily growing upon him that the Pope is Antichrist." And when Spalatin enquired, what he thought of war against the Turk, "Let us begin," he replied, "with the Turk at home; it is fruitless to fight carnal wars and be overcome in spiritual wars."*

But it would be a mistake to suppose that Rome had as yet resolved upon extreme measures. On the contrary, her policy was double as before: a bold front to the world, and a whisper of conciliation for the heretic and his friends, a smart blow to be quickly succeeded by the kiss of peace. Having buttressed up the dignity and reputation of her Cardinal, and uttered her authoritative voice to the world, she prepared for more gentle dealing with those whose faith was not amenable to the parchment and lead of the Vatican. Frederic's goodwill could not be forfeited in the present juncture of German affairs. Just at the crisis when Luther was about to appear before Cajetan, it had been intimated that the Pontiff would

* Letter of December 21. De Wette, I. p. 200.

present the Elector with the golden rose; and the delegate who 1518.
was to make the presentation in the Pontiff's name was also empowered to arrange the unpleasant business of "friar Martin's" heresy. It was the turn for moderate counsels. Cajetan, it was guardedly hinted, was a very improper person, as the Prince of the Thomist party, for the work of reconciliation; as an Italian, he could not be acceptable to the German nation; and his behaviour had been peremptory instead of conciliatory. In the person of the envoy now to be despatched direct to the Saxon Court, all these defects were to be more than repaired by the opposite virtues. Charles von Miltitz, the Pope's chamberlain, was not a theologian, but a diplomatist; he was not only a German but a Saxon; and, in place of arrogance or harshness, he was an accomplished courtier, versed in the arts of conciliation. Letters were received from the Vatican by Pfeffinger and Spalatin, exhorting them in the most complimentary strain to use their influence with Frederic to second the efforts of the new envoy. Popular feeling, however, was far from being conciliated by this new move on the part of Rome. Miltitz, it was hinted, had lived too long at Rome not to have imbibed a touch of Italian craft: it was reported that he would come laden with apostolic briefs; that, if fair means failed, he had orders to carry off the Reformer by force; and Luther's friends trembled for his safety more than ever, now that a Papal emissary was coming straight to their doors.

Before the close of the year, Miltitz arrived in Misnia. 1519.
He promptly paid a visit to Spalatin, an old friend, from whom he heard a good deal of Tetzel's malpractices, and sounded in return the feelings of the Saxon Court. And early in January he had an interview with Luther in Spalatin's house at Altenburg. The affability of the envoy surprised the Reformer. "He came," Luther afterwards said,

1519. "laden with seventy apostolic briefs to carry me alive, and bound, to that homicide Jerusalem, Rome, or rather Babylon: but, struck to the ground by God in the way—that is, terrified by what he has seen and heard of the popular agitation in the taverns by the road-side—he has changed his enmity to kindness." After the first civilities at meeting, Miltitz congratulated Luther on the high esteem in which he was held by the populace. "Out of five Germans, barely two, at the most three, were on the side of Rome. I should be a bold man to think of carrying you off, with twenty-five thousand soldiers at my call: you have torn Germany from the Papacy." Then, looking in Luther's face: "Brother Martin, I had expected to see an old man fond of prosing on theology in his chimney-corner; but you are in the prime and vigour of life." From compliments Miltitz advanced smoothly enough to business, and laboured to establish five points: 1. That the people had been seduced in the matter of indulgences. 2. That Luther had been the instrument of this seduction. 3. That he had been sorely provoked to it by Tetzel. 4. That the Archbishop of Magdeburg was to blame for impelling Tetzel to act as he had done on the spur of gain. 5. That Tetzel had exceeded his commission. It seemed to the envoy that this skilful mode of apportioning blame would soothe any irritation of the feelings, and lead to Luther's acknowleding his error in assailing an established dogma of the Church. The Reformer, in reply, maintained that the blame really rested at the Pontiff's door, for he had forced the Archbishop of Magdeburg to get money by some means or other to defray the cost of his pallium, which he might have conferred freely: and thus the Pontiff himself had made the virtue of indulgences a laughing-stock. He hinted also at the avarice of the Florentines, who had urged the Pontiff, a man himself of ingenuous mind, to gross pecuniary ex-

actions; and, "whilst they thought themselves able to bring 1519.
him into what port they pleased, were like to subject him to shipwreck." As to a retractation, Luther stated that as his first movement had been in defence of the Church against those who degraded her by false and covetous doctrines, so to retract without being convicted of error, would only deepen the Church's disgrace. It was ultimately agreed that both sides should be forbidden to write or act in the question; that Luther should revoke upon proof of his errors, and that the matter should be referred to the management of an enlightened Bishop. Luther suggested the Archbishop of Treves, or Salzburg, or the Bishop of Naumberg. At this arrangement the envoy expressed himself transported with joy; he mildly admonished Luther to forbearance, and let some few tears drop between his words. The Reformer looked on in silence: "I pretended not to understand," he afterwards said, "those crocodile tears." They supped together on the most friendly and convivial terms, and Miltitz spoke of the hubbub which the affair had raised at Rome—"for a hundred years nothing had been known like it, and the Cardinals would give ten thousand ducats, rather than let the matter proceed any farther." And he dismissed the Reformer with a kiss, "a Judas kiss," said Luther, "but I would not let him perceive that I saw through his Italian tricks."

But Miltitz regarded his duty as only half-performed in dealing with Luther. He had before summoned Tetzel into his presence to answer for his delinquencies; but the indulgence-trafficker had refused to appear, alleging the dangers of the road from many powerful chieftains, the adherents of Martin Luther. Miltitz therefore repaired to Leipsic, where Tetzel, having discontinued his professional perambulations, had found a domicile in the Dominican Convent of St. Paul: he instituted an investigation into his proceedings, and dis-

1519. covered from the Fuggers that he had swept large profits into his own pocket. The craven indulgence-retailer crept away into some obscure corner to hide his shame, and not long afterwards died, the victim of misery and despair. Perhaps the only person who grieved at his fate was his old adversary Luther, who regarded him as the scapegoat of worse offenders and the victim of a corrupt system.

In the midst of Miltitz' conciliatory negotiations, which, to the superficial observer, seemed to promise well, the Emperor Maximilian expired, on the 12th January. This event, so important to Europe, had also an immediate bearing upon Luther's case, inasmuch as, by the Germanic Constitution, during the interregnum the government devolved on the Elector of Saxony. So long, therefore, his Professor had little to fear from Rome. But whatever hopes the Nuncio might entertain of a successful adjustment of the controversy—and he boasted at Dresden that Dr. Martin was in his hands—or whatever might be the general opinion, Luther himself did not for a moment conceive that the matter could rest where it was. "God himself," he wrote to Staupitz,* "hurries, drives, not to say leads me: I am not master of myself: I wish to be quiet, and am hurried into the midst of tumults." He published, in the spring, his "Operations on the Psalms,"—he "could not call the work by a higher title,"—and dedicated them to the Elector Frederic; and put the finishing hand to his "Commentary on the Galatians," and committed it to the press. He was busy in his researches into ecclesiastical history, the canons, and decretals; and, with the criticism of native sagacity, was sifting the wheat from the chaff, the genuine writings of antiquity from the spurious. But with his researches his convictions continued to deepen daily.

* Letter of the 20th February. De Wette, I. p. 231.

"Whatever I have hitherto done against Rome," he said, 1519.
"has been but jest: soon I shall be in earnest." "Let me whisper in your ear," he wrote to Spalatin, "that I am not sure whether the Pope is Antichrist or his Apostle."

Yet he honestly carried out his arrangement with Miltitz, and published in February a statement of his opinions on many points of doctrine, that the world might not suppose him a worse heretic than he really was. Prayers to the Saints he approved; he believed in Purgatory; he venerated the Roman Church, but left the extent and foundation of the papal supremacy to the judgment of the learned.* He addressed also, on the 3rd March, a humble letter to the Pontiff. "Most blessed Father, necessity again compels me, albeit the dregs of mankind and the dust of the earth, to approach your Majesty. Lend paternal ears, as becomes the Vicar of Christ, to your poor sheep, and deign to regard my bleating." He stated that those acts of his which had been construed into irreverence to the Holy See had really sprung from zeal to preserve the honour of the Roman Church: that his writings, which his adversaries had sought to crush, had on that account only circulated the more widely, and had fixed their roots in the minds of men too deeply to be revocable. Indeed, that to revoke them would be to yield the Roman Church to the vituperation of all men. He protested that it never had been nor was it his intention to assail the Roman Church, whose power was paramount to everything save Jesus Christ the Lord of all. And he closed his epistle with a statement of his entire readiness to say nothing more whatever about indulgences, provided his enemies would cease their empty and arrogant language.

This letter produced little or no effect; and shortly after-

* Walch. XV. pp. 843—849.

1519. wards Luther heard that he had been burnt in effigy at Rome. But Miltitz remained warm in his work. In the middle of May he invited the Reformer to appear at Coblentz before the Archbishop of Treves and in presence of Cardinal Cajetan. Luther answered, that no mandate had as yet arrived from Rome by which the affair was entrusted to the Archbishop; that in the vacancy of the empire it was not likely any such mandate would arrive—if it should, the Archbishop might not accept it; that Cajetan was not a Catholic Christian, but had attempted to turn him aside from the Christian faith at Augsburg, and, when he had leisure, it was his intention to write to the Pope and Cardinals, and convict him of his errors if he did not amend them; and moreover, that the time appointed for his disputation with Dr. Eck of Ingolstadt was near at hand.

This contemplated disputation with John Eck was now the topic of general conversation, and was exciting much fear and hope in the breasts of both the antagonist parties. It has been already stated that Carlstadt had published a series of propositions for public disputation against the tenets of Eck. And Luther had had an interview with Eck at Augsburg, and arranged that the disputation to which Carlstadt had challenged the Ingolstadt Doctor should come off at Leipsic. But it afterwards appeared that through Carlstadt, Eck was aiming a blow at Luther: for he published a set of propositions in which he manifestly impugned the characteristic doctrines of the Wittenberg monk, particularly his denial of the Pope's primacy by Divine right. This was throwing down the gauntlet, and Luther, writing to the Elector of Saxony, declared that he deemed it due to the honour of his University, that he should pick it up. But in fact he was eager enough to accept the challenge on other grounds, and rejoiced in an opportunity of bringing the foundation of the papal pretensions more

fully before the public. There were however obstacles in the 1519.
way of the two renowned Doctors of Germany breaking a lance with one another in the controversial lists; and Luther wrote in vain three times to Duke George of Saxony, to obtain his permission to have the disputation held in his town of Leipsic. There was no difficulty raised as to the contest of Carlstadt with Eck, but the proposed combat of Eck and Luther seemed to involve a breach of the engagements entered into with Miltitz.

That stipulation however, of reciprocal silence, had already been infringed by the Papist party. Jerome Dungersheim of Ochsenfort, a Professor of Leipsic, had been canvassing the question of the papal supremacy with Luther in several letters, nominally indeed for the sake of information, but really in a spirit of hostility. Luther had replied very briefly but pertinently. If this were not deemed an infringement—and how could it be less?—yet the Minorites of Juterbock had openly preferred a charge of heresy against Luther to the Bishop of Brandenberg; they had searched his writings and clubbed together the heresies they had severally detected: they had visited Wittenberg itself on an inquisitorial mission, catechized his congregation as to his sermons, and taken down heritical propositions from his own mouth and the lips of his friends. Luther on his part answered their charge with contempt, warned them that no task could be easier than to expose their ignorance; recommended them silence for the future; but offered them peace or war.* These were indications of what common sense could scarcely have overlooked, even without them; that the popular agitation had run too high, and the interest of all Germany in the struggle was too intense to be suppressed or curbed by the diplomatic ligatures

* Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 213.

1519. of Miltitz. But beyond Germany the same agitation was fermenting in the popular mind. Luther heard from Switzerland that his writings were highly esteemed there. Froben of Basle had never entered upon such a profitable speculation as reprinting them: a bookseller of Pavia was selling numerous copies in Italy: all along the Rhine, in Spain and Gaul, in Brabant and England, they were in great request: they were perused by the Doctors of the Sorbonne. Every other interest seemed absorbed in the great and overwhelming topic of religion—Rome or Scripture was the one question. And particularly in the interval of the interregnum, when thought seemed more than ordinarily unfettered and language unrestrained,* men of all ranks might be observed to be choosing their side, as for a war which every one knew to be unavoidable. But these are apologies for the conduct of Luther's adversaries, not of Luther, for he had been challenged by Eck, and his opinions openly assailed; and he was not bound to silence unless his opponents observed the same.

The 27th of June had been fixed for the disputation, and three days previously the Wittenberg party entered Leipsic. Carlstadt led the van in one of the low open waggons on wooden wheels (roll-wagen) used in that age: Duke Barnim of Pomerania, as Rector of the University of Wittenberg, followed with Luther and Melancthon on either side: and about two hundred Wittenberg students, full of zeal for their Professors and University, and armed, as some accounts say, with pikes and halberts, brought up the rear. But in proceeding through the town a wheel of Carlstadt's waggon broke down, and the Archdeacon was precipitated in the mire. Luther's waggon thus obtained the first place, and led the procession to the door of the lodging. And this accident was

* Cochlæus, Acta et Scripta, p. 12.

regarded by the bystanders as an omen of the issue of the contest. 1519.

It was however as yet by no means clear that Luther would be admitted to share in the disputation at all: and he says himself that he entered Leipsic as a spectator and not a combatant. The Bishop of Merseburg had caused a notice, in prohibition of the controversy, to be nailed to all the church doors in Leipsic: but as soon as ever Duke George entered his capital, he resented this as a stretch of ecclesiastical power, and had the notices torn down. As soon, therefore, as Luther's arrival was known, Eck called upon him, and complained that he understood he was unwilling to contend with him. "You," he said to Luther, "are the principal; I care very little for disputing with Carlstadt." "Obtain permission from the Duke," Luther replied, "and I will gratify you." Eck now addressed himself to Duke George, and represented the extreme anxiety which was generally felt that he should be allowed to enter the lists against Luther himself; he adverted to the laurels he had won already, and spoke with confidence of a triumph for the Roman Church on the present occasion. The Duke was induced to give his permission.

The popular speculations passed over Carlstadt, and only dwelt on the chances of success as between Luther and Eck. Dr. John Meyer Eck had won polemical laurels in Pannonia, Lombardy, and Bavaria, and as yet had overborne every competitor. At first, the expectation prevailed that he would be the victor at Leipsic; and Luther had to allay the apprehension which even Spalatin and the Elector of Saxony felt on the subject, by laying before the secretary an account of the chief arguments available on both sides, his answers to Eck's, and the reasons he had for knowing that Eck could not satisfactorily explain away his. "In human judgment," he wrote to Spalatin, "I have been undone long ago: my theses, my

1519. sermon, my answer to Prierias, my 'solutions,' the Augsburg interviews—all and each of these was to end in my ruin! And God will overrule this disputation too for good." As the day approached, expectation began to veer, and pointed its finger to Luther as likely to be the conqueror; and, on the eve of the discussion, there was generally this presentiment in Leipsic itself, where his doctrines at this period were held in the deepest aversion. His calm demeanour inspired respect for his abilities.

A preliminary meeting was held to arrange the mode of conducting the disputation, and the question first canvassed was whether notes should be taken of the arguments. Carlstadt demanded that what was said on both sides should be committed to writing for publication: Eck urged, that if notes should be taken of the proceedings, the fluency and vehemence of speaking would be obstructed. It was at length agreed that minutes should be made of the arguments: but it does not appear that any settlement was come to as to the question of publication. Afterwards, in an interview with Luther, Eck insisted that the disputation thus taken down in writing should be submitted to some judge for the award of victory, and he proposed the Pontiff. Luther answered that he never could consent to the Pontiff as judge; but, to avoid the appearance of wishing to decline the contest, he assented to submitting the disputation to the Universities of Erfurth and Paris. In regard to the question of publication he used no ambiguity. "Never imagine," he said, "that I will bind myself to hold my tongue."

On the morning of the 27th, mass was celebrated in the Church of St. Thomas. Princes, nobles, councillors, and professors walked in procession to the church, and after the service returned in the same order to Pleissenberg Castle, where the great hall had been fitted up as the scene of the

disputation. Duke George, the hereditary Prince John of Saxony, the Duke of Pomerania, and Prince George of Anhalt, had separate seats assigned them: the less distinguished of the audience sat upon benches: and two pulpits had been erected for the disputants. When all had taken their places, an introductory address, an exhortation to courtesy and gentle language, was delivered by Mosellanus. On the conclusion of the address the notes of the organ pealed through the hall; and all the company bending upon their knees joined in the hymn, "Veni Sancte Spiritus." This was the inauguration of the contest; and at the close of the hymn the assembly dispersed for their noonday repast: Duke George himself gave a grand entertainment to the disputants, and the more eminent of the spectators. At two o'clock in the afternoon the discussion commenced between Eck and Carlstadt. Its knotty subject was the power of the human will, which Carlstadt affirmed was spiritually altogether in bondage, but which Eck asserted possessed a measure of freedom, so as to be able to co-operate with God's grace. Eck was very much annoyed that Carlstadt had his books with him, and that Philip Melancthon would sometimes walk from his bench to Carlstadt's pulpit, and suggest an argument or quotation, until at last Eck thundered out, "Sit down, you grammarian, and don't disturb me." And when he succeeded in having Carlstadt's books put aside, his overpowering voice and voluble eloquence crushed opposition, and reigned in the hall. But this disputation attracted no large amount of interest, and latterly the benches were almost empty. As to the controversial merits of the arguments adduced on either side, Luther avers that "to his certain knowledge Carlstadt carried back his proposition safe and unharmed to Wittenberg." 1519.

But whilst this discussion continued, the Duke of Pomerania requested that Luther would preach in the private chapel

1519. of the castle on the anniversary of St. Peter and St. Paul. At an early hour the chapel was filled, and as many who were eager to be present could not obtain seats or standing room, an adjournment was made to the large hall of disputation. Luther took as his text the Gospel of the day;* and treated, first, of the grace of God, and the human will, and secondly, of the power of Peter and the keys. Of the will, he said, that the beginning of its freedom was the entrance of grace. The grace of God must create God's image in the heart, and the best preparation for his grace was to despair of self. Under his second head he declared that the keys were not given to Peter exclusively, but in his person to the Christian Church, "to me and to you, for the comforting of our consciences." This sermon inflamed to greater intensity the hatred of the partisans of Rome. The charge of "Bohemian poison" resounded in a tone of menace; and he was subjected to personal affront from the populace in the streets: and on one occasion, when he chanced to enter a church whilst mass was celebrating, the priests hurried away the wafer and the sacred utensils, and passed rapidly out of the sacred edifice, crossing themselves as they went. All the pulpits in the city were placed at Eck's service, and four times successively he fulminated his anathemas against heresy; and when Luther demanded permission to reply, every pulpit was closed against him. The University offered him the usual compliment of wine; but this was the narrow extent of their civility: and the only friends he had of the inhabitants of the city were Doctor Auerbach, who had stood by his side at Augsburg, and Doctor Pistor, the younger. The Leipsic and the Wittenburg students more than once came to blows in the streets; and if Luther escaped the assault of open violence, it may be

* Matt. xvi.

accounted for in some measure from the superstitious horror 1519.
which enveloped him, a tale of the clergy having gained general circulation, that he carried the devil about with him in a small box.

At length the anxiously awaited moment arrived: and on the 4th July, at seven o'clock in the morning, the great hall was filled to overflowing with an excited audience, the personal friends, or warm allies of the two champions. Eck's natural confidence had been additionally inflated by his manifest superiority in learning and ability to Carlstadt. In person he was tall and handsome, and showed off his fine figure to the best advantage by the animated action with which he disputed: and his strong voice harmonised with his stalwart frame. Mosellanus remarked, in reference to his mental powers, that his memory was astonishing; and "if the strength of the other faculties corresponded, he would be an extraordinary man." On the tapestry hanging from his pulpit the figure of St. George was embroidered. Luther was of a stature but little above the ordinary; he was so thin at this time that his bones almost seemed to pierce his skin; his voice, far less powerful than Eck's, was clearer and more musical; his eyes beamed with earnest thought, and his features generally wore the impress of the severe spiritual conflicts which he had passed through. He mounted his pulpit, before which the figure of St. Martin was suspended with a nosegay in his hand, and with a cheerful air: but when he prepared for the discussion, his countenance assumed deep seriousness of expression. The idea impressed on the spectators by their relative appearances was, that John Eck, in the confidence of his learning and talents was seeking renown; Luther, in reliance on God, was seeking truth.

Before beginning the disputation Eck protested that he "submitted all he was about to say to the judgment of the

1519. supreme See and the Lord who sat upon it." Luther, in his turn, protested—"In the name of the Lord, Amen. I embrace and follow the protestation of Dr. Eck. I add this, that in reverence to the Pope and the Roman Church, I would willingly have omitted this subject, as unnecessary and extremely invidious, had I not been dragged into it by the proposition of Dr. Eck. I grieve at the absence of those who were bound to be present, I mean the heretical inquisitors."* The proposition alluded to was the thirteenth and last in Eck's series, to this effect: "We deny that the Roman Church was not superior to others before the times of Sylvester; and we always recognise as successor of Peter and General-Vicar of Christ him who holds the See and the faith of the blessed Peter." In opposition to this, Luther's thirteenth proposition maintained: "The superiority of the Roman Church to others is only proved by cold decrees of Pontiffs not more than four hundred years old, against which there are eleven hundred years of approved history, the text of Scripture, and the decree of the most venerable Council of Nice." The disputation was immediately directed to this article, the Pope's primacy, as based or not on divine precept, which the Papists themselves, Prierias, Cajetan, and now Eck, had made, according to a military phrase, "the key to their position."

"The Church," Eck commenced, "is a monarchy after the type of the heavenly monarchy," and he quoted Scripture and the fathers to prove this statement. Luther declared his assent. "And the head of this earthly monarchy," Eck proceeded, "is the Pontiff, the successor of Peter." "No," Luther replied, "the Church militant is a monarchy, but its head is not man, but Christ himself; for 'He must reign till

* Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 232.

he hath put all enemies under his feet;' and again, 'Lo, I 1519.
am with you always;' and again, 'Then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;' and he himself exclaimed to St. Paul, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Here, as Augustine says, is the head speaking for its members." Quotations followed from the fathers and decrees of Councils. But Luther went farther, and advanced a mass of proof from the patristic writings, that "by divine right all Bishops are equal;" and also a passage from Jerome in evidence that presbyter and bishop were in primitive times the same, and "differed now by custom rather than divine authority."

Eck, in support of the Divine right of the primacy, rested on two texts of Scripture alone or principally—"Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church," &c.; and the injunction thrice repeated to Peter—"Feed my sheep." Luther replied—"The true translation of the first quoted text is, 'Thou art Peter (a stone), and on this rock I will build my Church;' that is, as Augustine and Ambrose explain, not on Peter, but on Peter's confession of faith: for 'other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;' and as Peter himself declares, 'To whom coming as unto a living stone, &c., ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house.' All believers are stones built on the foundation-stone or rock Jesus Christ." In answer to the other text Luther stated, "The thrice repeated injunction to Peter was a solemn warning to him to spurn every dignity, to love nothing but the Saviour, to deny himself and that self-righteous confidence through which he had thrice denied the Lord." "But," continued Eck, "It was Peter who walked on the sea to go to Christ, which, says St. Bernard, typified the world made subject to him: Christ commanded him, 'Follow thou me:' Peter exhorted the Apostles previous to

1519. the election of Matthias." Luther answered, "To exhort is no proof of primacy, but the common office of Apostles: as to the admonition to 'follow' the Saviour, so far St. John might have better claims to the primacy, as the notion was current that he should never die: in walking on the waters Peter was beginning to sink, but really to trample the world under foot is the duty of every Christian. I might add, that the Apostles sent Peter as well as John to Samaria: that James confirmed the speech of Peter;* that Paul 'withstood Peter to the face because he was to be blamed;' that in the description of the ecclesiastical body by St. Paul there are enumerated—'first Apostles, then prophets, thirdly teachers:' no hint of any primacy; that Paul spoke of himself as the 'Apostle of the Gentiles,' of Peter as the 'Apostle of the circumcision;' that Matthias was not ordained, nor Paul and Barnabas separated to the ministry by Peter; that 'the thief on the cross kept the faith,' as saith Augustine, 'which Peter denied;' that 'the new Jerusalem' has twelve foundations; the brazen sea was supported by twelve oxen, Solomon's throne by twelve lions, twelve stones were placed by the Jordan, all in direct contradiction to the idea of any inequality." But Luther was at this time willing to concede to St. Peter a primacy of honour. When the argument came to ecclesiastical history, Luther maintained that the Church of Christ had existed for twenty years before the Church of Rome existed at all; that Church was itself an offshoot from the Church of Jerusalem: the Greek Church had been independent for 1400 years, and "now at last were Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Epiphanius, Cyprian, and a host of saints to be driven from their seat in heaven?"† that in the fourth century many churches were independent of Rome,

* Acts xv. † De cœlo deturbare.

and the patriarchates were on an equality, as appeared by the 1519.
decree of the Council of Nice; that Gregory the Great had repudiated expressly the title of Œcumenical or Universal Bishop. Yes, Eck replied, but there is a difference between Universal Bishop and Bishop of the Universal Church. The audience laughed at the sophistry; and Luther observed that he had obtained one valuable piece of information to take back with him to Wittenberg.

Throughout the disputation Luther laboured under the difficulty of having to confront citations from authorities now well ascertained to be spurious, such as Dionysius the Areopagite and the false decretals. Eck's reading had been more extensive than the Reformer's; and in quoting passages from rare authors he did not fail to remark that probably his adversary had not heard their names before. But with that intuitive sagacity, which, with all his immense reading and prodigious memory, the Doctor of Ingolstadt wanted, Luther boldly advanced the charge of spuriousness from internal evidence against many of the works quoted; as, for instance, against an alleged constitution of Anacletus, in which it was asserted that "Cephas" was synonymous with head.

But Eck's strong point was the insinuation of heresy against his opponent; and he pushed Luther hard with the accusation of being "a patron of the doctrines of Wycliffe, Huss, and the Bohemians." This charge was deliberately made, and the effects of the reply it was well known would be felt throughout Europe: there were Bohemians in the hall whom the controversy had called to Leipsic: and Duke George and the audience were carried away by the overwhelming interest of the moment, and half rose from their seats in expectation of the manner in which the accusation would be met. It evidently cost Luther an effort to answer as he did, for he foresaw the consequences; but he disdained

1519. equivocation "The Bohemians," he replied, "are schismatics, and I strongly reprobate schism; the supreme divine right is charity and unity. But amongst the articles of John Huss, condemned by the Council of Constance, some are plainly most Christian and evangelical." Hence it followed that a general Council was not infallible; this conclusion was inevitable: and this was in fact the chief result to the Reformer's system of doctrines from the Leipsic disputation. He had appealed from the Pope to a General Council, and condemned the primacy as of divine right by the voice of a Council; but he was now driven from this transition stage, and fell back on the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the only infallible standard. But Eck had so far gained his point that he had clear proof of his opponent's heresy for the papal ear.

The debate on the primacy lasted five days. Duke George acted the part of a courteous, and for the most part an impartial president of the contest. He one day observed to Luther and Eck at his own dinner-table in interruption of their conversation—"Whether the Pope be by divine or human right, at least he *is* Pope." "I was much pleased," Luther remarked afterwards, "with this observation, for it proved the Duke saw the folly of our discussion." In some respects the Reformer perceived a decided leaning to Eck, but "I could distinguish," said he, "between the pipe and the breath which blew on it: whenever the Duke spoke of his own mind his words were most princely." After the question of the Primacy the doctrines of Indulgences, Repentance, Absolution, Satisfaction, and Purgatory passed under discussion. Luther did not deny Purgatory, but maintained that Scripture spoke only of two states in the eternal world. Of prayers to the dead, he remarked that the Maccabees commended them; but the apocryphal books were not canonical; the Jews had never regarded them as such. The nearest ap-

proximation in opinion between Luther and Eck was on the 1519.
subject of Indulgences, which supplied matter chiefly for ridicule, and "was almost hissed off the stage." Their disputation concluded on the morning of the 14th at eight o'clock: after which Carlstadt and Eck renewed their encounter, discussing the merit of good works: and on the 16th the whole was closed by a sermon and the chaunt of Te Deum.

The opinions were various to which side the palm of victory was due. The Leipsickers declared that it remained with Eck. But that Eck himself did not feel this to be certain, is evident from his complaint that the Wittenberg party brought their books into the hall of disputation, took careful notes of all that was said, and in the interval studied the subject for discussion for the next day, and were many against one. "There were," he averred, "two doctors, Lange the Vicar of the Augustines, two licentiates, a very arrogant nephew of Reuchlin, three doctors of law, and a host of masters." Yet Eck had Emser and the Leipsic Professors to aid him with their counsel; and if he wanted books the University Library was all at his service: and in fact the Leipsic masters asserted that they had won the cause for him. Eck persisted that he was all alone, and Luther confirmed his assertion, so far at least as that his coadjutors kept quite quiet and he was always clamouring. There can be no doubt, the Reformer said that he "outbellowed" us. But he did not think highly of Eck's argumentative claims. "We had examined at Wittenberg," he said, "the subjects in dispute so closely as to count the bones; Eck only grazed the skin: he is a water spider and runs along the surface; he flies before a text of Scripture as the devil before the cross." He told Eck, with one of those flashes of his genius with which he ever and anon lighted up the maze of the controversy, that, "The theologian, if he would not err, must place the whole of

1519. Scripture before his eyes, and compare contraries with contraries; and then seeming contraries, like the faces of the cherubim turned away from one another yet meeting over the centre of the mercy-seat, would all be found to meet in Christ." Eck ceased to brawl of Luther that he was a man without learning; but the most convincing proof that he knew himself to be vanquished, is that his wounded pride never healed; but the amity which had till then been maintained with some kind of semblance was exchanged on his part for the most rancorous and untiring persecution.

The controversy sounded throughout Germany, and everywhere produced an incredible sensation. Indulgences were quite forgotten in the vastly more interesting enquiry which had now been brought before the public, affecting the groundwork of the pretensions of Rome; and the popular sympathies rushed into this new channel with a force of which there had been no example. The painters caricatured Dr. Eck, the poets satirized him, the ballad-singers sung his defeat at the street corners. And against this aggregate of talent he had only the poetaster Rubeus to chime his praises. The pun of Erasmus became popular; "Don't call him Eck, call him Jeck."* Ulric Hutten, ever amongst the foremost, sharpened his sword, for he was rejoiced to think he might have need of it, and sharpened his pen; and, having abjured Rome for ever, as his motto said, "the die being cast," made a dash at Eck in the "planed-off corner (Eck)." Lazarus Spengler, and Bilibald Pirkheimer, let him taste the pungent salt of Nuremberg. And the "unlearned regulars" of the diocese of Misnia, who had been accused to their Bishop by Eck of Lutheranism, requested, by the pen of Œcolampadius, of "the most glorious, superlatively learned, and triumphant

* Dutch for fool.

Dr. Eck," to explain his arguments, which surpassed their comprehension, nay, that of the Pope himself; whereas Luther's were so level to their simple minds, in such striking harmony with Scripture and the fathers, as well as acceptable, which was strange, to the most learned men of the age. None of the flying squibs of the day stung Eck more keenly. 1519.

But besides this "biting from beneath a hedge,"* as Luther called these anonymous satires, various accounts of the disputation were soon afloat, to Eck's extreme annoyance. Melancthon forwarded his description of the controversy to Œcolampadius; and Eck, from fulminating against his opponent, and chaunting his own panegyric in the Leipsic pulpits, turned to his pen, and wrote *his* version of the disputation in answer to the "grammarian," who, although he was "not quite ignorant of Greek and Latin," was too far below him to be "challenged in the theological stadium." But his hopes were fixed on the Universities; and, by the agency of the aged Hochstraten and Duke George, he trusted to influence the Universities of Louvain and Paris to deliver a verdict in his favour. His only confidence was thus in a packed jury of academicians. The public eye shot scorn and ridicule. Thirty versions of the disputation were already in existence, so pressing was the demand, when the authoritative account, as taken down by the notaries of the Wittenberg side, made its appearance, and was hailed by Eck and his faction with a chorus of reproach, as against the preliminary agreement. On the heels of this document Luther published his "Solutions of the Thirteen Propositions" with a preface, in which he quoted his own explicit words—"Never imagine that I will consent to hold my tongue." And this preface again entangled him with Eck's pen.

* Morsus sub sepe.

1519. An important effect of the Leipsic disputation was the intercourse thus opened between the Christianity of Wittenberg and of Bohemia. The prefect of the College of the Emperor Charles, at Prague, wrote Luther a letter of congratulation, and enclosed some books of Huss; and Luther, in return, sent the Bohemians all or the greater part of his own treatises. The Curate, also, of the Cathedral of Prague, forwarded to him the assurance of the hearty goodwill of the Bohemian Christians, who "had prayed night and day to God in his behalf, and offered up supplications in all their churches for his success." But Jerome Emser, Luther's old Leipsic acquaintance, thought he might put with advantage a spoke of his own into the wheel, and wrote to the administrator of the Catholic Church in Prague to encourage him in bringing back stragglers to the "one fold," by saying that Luther, "in his rare erudition," had not disclaimed any charge with such vehemence as that of sympathy with the Bohemian Beghards. Luther marked the craft and malevolence of this insinuation, and indited a sharp reply to the "Emseran he-goat," twitted him on his avarice and incontinence, and advised him to borrow a little of his friend Eck's memory. "The Adam in him," the Reformer said, "was full of gall, but the Christ in him suppressed it." As for the Bohemians, they were schismatics, and schism was condemned in Scripture, but only a lying tongue could call them heretics. The paper war, if for a moment it had shown a tendency to slacken, redoubled in activity after the Leipsic combat. Augustine Alveld, a Franciscan of Leipsic, attacked Luther in a tract, which, said he, "in brain, nose, mouth, and hair, shows the Leipsic ox;"* and, as he had not a spare hour to waste, he deputed Lonicer, a Wittenberg student, to write from his suggestions

* *I. e.* Dungersheim of Ochsenfort.

an answer for him. And when Thomas Rhadinus, no other, 1519.
as he supposed, but incorrrectly, than the "he-goat" under a personated name, made another butt at him, he handed over this aggressor to his faithful armour-bearer, Melancthon*.

But by far the most important result of the disputation was its influence in expanding and consolidating Luther's theological system. He had before said, "Wycliffe and Huss assailed the morals, but in assailing the doctrines of Rome we seize the goose by the throat;" but by perusing the writings of Huss, he found that the strictures of the Bohemian Apostle had not been confined to the mode of life, that there was much he might learn from him, and he exclaimed with deep earnestness that "God would assuredly visit it upon the world, that truth had been proclaimed a century ago and had been burnt. St. Paul, Augustine, John Staupitz, all of us," he exclaimed, "are Hussites." He found that Huss had repudiated the doctrine of Purgatory, and being convinced by renewed examination that Scripture was with him, he rejected it also. He read with great interest the objections of Huss, on plain grounds of Scripture, to the denial of the cup to the laity in the Lord's Supper; and shortly afterwards, in a sermon to his Wittenberg people, declared his conviction that it was "highly advisable that a General Council should determine the administration of both kinds to the laity in the Sacrament." These discoveries led the way to others. In treating upon confession from the pulpit at this period, he divides it into confession to God, or that of faith; confession to the injured party, or that of charity; and auricular confession, "the appointment not of God but of the Pope." He began to hint that a General Council would do well to "allow curates their lawful wives instead of strumpets:" and pronounced with

* See Bretschneider, I. p. 288.

1519. emphasis his condemnation of the "monk's begging sack," which Eck made a special charge against him; "for himself, he had much rather have learnt some honest handicraft, and in that faith he should die, despite Dr. Eck." Again, the Franciscans of Juterbock, who had slunk back to growl in secret at Luther's first rebuff, had now obtained the patronage of Eck; and under his wing were clamouring with augmented fury against the Wittenberg heretic. Luther in his reply warned them of their folly in trusting to Dr. Eck, who was, "as the wolf said to the nightingale, voice and nothing more:" but it is more worthy of remark, that, as in the constant expansion of his views in almost every tract he throws out a fresh ray of light, so here he says, "I ask what passage of Scripture gives power to the Pope to canonize Saints: next, what necessity there is to canonize Saints: finally, what utility there is in canonizing Saints."* About the same time also the treatise of Laurentius Valla on "the donation of Constantine," edited by Hutten, fell into his hands, and he learnt from it, and communicated the intelligence with exultation to Spalatin, that the famous donation was all a fiction.

It was likewise a memorable trophy of the Leipsic disputation that Caspar Cruciger, whose name will often occur in this biography, at that time a student at Leipsic, was converted by means of Luther's arguments to a knowledge of the Gospel. And a scarcely less illustrious trophy was that Melancthon thenceforward became a theologian, and soon afterwards commenced lecturing on St. Paul's Epistles, with so much penetration and ability that Luther exclaimed with pride, "The little Greek will beat me too in theology." In the interval which followed on the discussion, before men's minds had been drawn to some other subject by some fresh event,

* Contra malignum Johan. Eccii judicium. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 225.

Melancthon published in answer to Eck, his first theological 1519.
writing, terse and elegant like all the fabrics of his intellect. It proclaimed Scripture as the only Lydian stone to test truth. That Scripture is abused, he asserted, is the fault not of Scripture but of those who bring the heat of prejudice to its study: "as the polypus imbibes the colour of the rock it clings to, so is Scripture coloured by human fancies and preconceived notions." And this in one sentence was certainly the greatest result of the collision in Pleissenburg Castle, that thenceforth—not the Pope, nor even a General Council, but Scripture, was recognised by the Lutherans as the only religion of Christians. "The reed of Egypt nothing against the sword of the Spirit."

On the other hand, the disputation, which had yielded such fruits to the reforming party, had not left the Romanists without hope. To a certain extent Luther had fallen into the trap which had been laid for him; and Duke George, following in the traces of Eck, in a letter to Frederic before the end of the year, hinted that the promotion of his Professor to be "Bishop of Prague" might be shortly looked for. The University of Cologne condemned Luther's writings before the end of August; and that of Louvain did the same early in November. One or two bishops placed his writings and Hutten's in their "index expurgatorius." The Bishop of Misnia placarded in public his condemnation of Luther's sermon on the Sacrament of the Altar. The Bishop of Brandenburg, who had hitherto shown him some countenance, had now become his determined foe; and, in the presence of his courtiers, taking up a brand and throwing it into the fire, exclaimed, "I will never rest till Martin is consumed like that brand." The priests of Misnia did not scruple to declare that to kill Luther would be no sin. And the malice of his enemies, building on the foundation laid at Leipsic, had

1519. invented and circulated a story that he was of Bohemian birth and parentage, which he found it necessary to disprove in a letter to Spalatin, and in a public "declaration."

The least idle of all the Romanist party was the leader of the persecution himself. Eck, after various rencontres with pen and ink in sequel to the great Leipsic combat, prepared for a public bonfire of Luther's writings at Ingolstadt; but the good sense of Reuchlin prevailed upon the University to exercise forbearance. Eck then turned from attempting to burn to attempting to refute; and with his best talent, and most ostentatious learning, composed an elaborate treatise on the primacy of St. Peter. The work was an ingenious superstructure built on piles of quotations from spurious fathers, spurious decretals, and spurious decrees of Councils. Having thus refuted Luther, which he had promised to do—and he told the reader he had kept his word—and having given the minor spirits of his Pandemonium their cue, he hastened away at the end of February to Rome, to present his book in person to the Pontiff. There was one vigorous hope in his breast, of which he was assured he should not be disappointed, to add his strength to that of Prierias, Cajetan, and the Thomist phalanx around Leo, and crush his adversary for ever by the whole weight of the Papacy. It was the Pope who must now speak, in accents such as he had not yet used, that infallible judge to whom he had submitted all that he had said.

Simultaneously with the early part of the Leipsic disputation, the electoral conclave at Frankfort was engaged in deep deliberation on whose brow the crown of the empire should be placed. The deliberations commenced on the 17th June. The competitors for the prize were Francis of France, and Charles of Spain; for Henry of England had retired from the contest. The Pope, who dreaded the union of the kingdom

of Naples with the empire, was on the side of Francis, and 1519.
had exerted himself in the cause with a zeal which had even been deemed intrusive by the Rhenish Electors, who were more favourably disposed to France, and in this way had added to the unpopularity of the Papacy in Germany. The course of events inclined against Francis. The private wars which raged before and during the canvass took a turn so decidedly opportune for Austria just at the crisis of the election, and Spanish gold flowed so freely among the electoral dependants, aided by large promises of various kinds to the Electors themselves, that before the decisive day the issue could be foreseen. The Electors of Treves, Brandenburg, and Saxony alone remained unpledged to Austria. Many had been the attempts, and large the offers of the Austrian negociators, to extract from the incorruptible Frederic the promise of his vote, to which a peculiar moral weight was attached; yet, although no engagement had been entered into, a marriage contract between the son of his brother and colleague Duke John and Catherine, sister of Charles V., pointed to the bias of his sentiments. There were, however, those among the Electors who had formed the scheme of setting aside both the professed candidates, and filling the imperial throne by a choice from their own body. Joachim of Brandenburg was ambitious enough to covet earnestly this elevation for himself, but he did not enjoy that public esteem which constituted one of the many qualifications of Frederic. And accordingly, in a nocturnal conference, the Elector of Treves exhorted his brother Elector of Saxony to accept the diadem, if it should be offered him, and to sanction his canvassing in his behalf. Had he assented, the interest of the French monarch, who despaired of his own chance of success, and the interest of the Pontiff, would both have been thrown into the scale, and

1519. would probably have turned it in his favour. But on mature consideration Frederic rejected the proposal, on the ground that in the present turbulent times his authority would be insufficient to maintain internal tranquillity and check the encroachments of the Turks. Charles of Austria was of German descent, and the most powerful prince of the age: and after Frederic's refusal he stood alone in his claims. On the 28th June, the Electors assembled in the dimly lighted chapel in the choir of the Church of St. Bartholomew, in their scarlet robes of state; and the Elector of Treves being asked by the Elector of Mentz for whom he gave his vote, replied, "For Charles of Austria." The voice of the entire College repeated the same words. And Charles, King of Spain, both the Sicilies, Jerusalem, Hungary, Dalmatia and Croatia, Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Count of Hapsburg, Flanders, and the Tyrol, and lord of a new hemisphere, was pronounced duly elected Emperor of Germany. But had the election been postponed an hour, the success of some German adherents of France against the partisans of Austria, trivial in itself, and, as events turned out, without fruit, might possibly have altered the destinies of Europe.

Charles was at Barcelona holding the Catalonian Cortes when the news of his election reached him. And meanwhile, until he could visit Germany, Frederic of Saxony was nominated Lieutenant of the Regency. No council of Regency, however, was appointed. The public affairs were administered by the imperial Commissioners at Augsburg; the old Councillors of Maximilian presided over by the Archduchess Margaret; and notwithstanding the Electors had made express stipulations for enlarging the liberties of the States, everything proceeded in the old despotic fashion. But in the absence of Charles the settlement of religious dissensions, as

dependant on the civil power, of course remained in abeyance. 1519.
And in this way divine Providence again shielded the rising struggles of truth.

In the middle of January Luther addressed a letter to the 1520.
youthful emperor, imploring him to cast a favourable eye upon his cause, which was "worthy to come before the throne of heaven, much more before an earthly potentate." He had been drawn, he said, from his corner against his will, and solely by his love of truth; he had offered mutual silence to his adversaries in vain; he had demanded proof of his errors, none had been vouchsafed. It was evident that in plotting his ruin his foes meant nothing less than the extirpation of the Gospel. He therefore implored his most Serene Majesty, the prince of the kings of the earth, to take the cause of truth under the shadow of his wings, to defend which God had entrusted to him the sword, and not to suffer him to be condemned unheard.* Towards the end of the same month, the Spanish Ambassador paid a visit to the Saxon Court, and was honoured with a magnificent entertainment by Frederic, to which Luther and Melanethon were invited, and argued the great religious question with the Ambassador. This invitation was a proof to the Imperial Court of the Elector's regard for Luther's cause; and it is memorable as the only occasion on which Frederic and Luther ever conversed together: they afterwards met face to face for the last time in the Diet of Worms. The Reformer soon afterwards addressed an epistle, deprecating being condemned unheard, to the Archbishop of Mentz, and another to the same purport to the Bishop of Merseberg. In this letter he spoke of his readiness to be relieved from the wearisomeness of public notice and his office of teaching, for it was his continual grief that "he did

* De Wette, I. pp. 392, 394.

1520. not live as he taught;"* and he had never sought his own glory, but only truth. The Archbishop replied that Luther was culpable in declaiming with vehemence on such points as freewill and the Pope's primacy; and the Bishop, that he was rebelling against the papal power.† The curtain was already let fall on the indulgence controversy.

Fresh proofs were afforded the Reformer of his Prince's regard, by the request which the Elector made through Spalatin, that he would write an explanation of the Epistles and Gospels throughout the Christian year, a work begun this spring, and which appeared in parts, as promptly as Luther's other multifarious labours would allow, under the title of "Postils." The wish of Frederic was to divert the Reformer's attention from "quarrelsome, biting, and turbulent writings," and lead him to "apply his mind to the quiet pursuit of sacred literature." But, at the same time, Luther had become the court theologian, and his judgment was constantly referred to in explanation of passages of Scripture. He was asked to write a consolatory treatise for the use of Frederic, who was labouring under severe illness, and produced the "Tessaradecas," and dedicated it to his patron. He had preached a sermon on "good works," dwelling on his great principle that good works, as men call them, are not in outward acts, but in the heart, which Spalatin, at the suggestion of Duke John, requested him to write down and print: he did so, enlarging it from a sermon to a book, and dedicated it to the Duke. He gave the preference to this tract over all his previous works: but "perhaps this very leaven," he added, "of self-satisfaction has tainted and spoilt it." But it was in vain that Spalatin, here also the mouthpiece of the Saxon Court, tried to instil the importance of avoiding bitterness

* Quod non vivo quod doceo. † Walch. XV. p. 1651.

in controversy, on occasion of a severe reply from the Re- 1520.
former to an inhibitory schedule placarded against his sermon on the Eucharist by the Bishop of Misnia.* Luther answered that the Gospel was so dear to him, that he would not permit an angel from heaven to defame one of its truths, much less a Bishop—"a terrestrial idol." And he defended his severity on the plea that tame writings soon fall into oblivion; and, if his own age judged him too acrimonious, the judgment of posterity would be more compassionate. "You cannot," he continued, "make a sword into a feather, or war into peace: and the word of God is war, it is ruin, a reproach, perdition, and poison; it meets the children of Ephraim as a bear in the way, and a lioness in the wood." But the contrast between Luther's words and acts was never better evidenced than at this very time. A riot between the students and some of the townspeople had filled the streets of Wittenberg with tumult; many of the University authorities, and amongst them the Rector Burckard, took the side of the students; but Luther sharply reproved this timorous partiality; he insisted that the Elector's mandate should be obeyed, and no weapon be carried by any student, and, mounting the pulpit, reprimanded both the offending parties with even-handed justice. The devil, he said, had been foiled at Augsburg and at Leipsic, and, being very wroth, trusted to traduce the Gospel by fomenting brawls at Wittenberg.

"The wild ass of Leipsic," so Luther styled Alveld, "brayed again;" † and the Reformer followed up Lonicer's writing by a tract from his own pen, "On the Papacy." Having thus dealt a settling blow to one adversary, he turned round to deal one to another. Prierias, "the Greek barbarian and Roman

* Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 465. † De Wette, I. p. 445.

1520. cook,"* had not only replied to Luther's "Answer," but was engaged in compiling a standing exposure of Luther's heterodoxy, a learned medley of scholastic quotations, and had sent the Reformer an epitome of the third book, to let him understand by the sample of one rod what must be the combined weight of the implement preparing for his chastisement. Luther served this "Epitome" as he had before served the "Reply." He re-edited it with marginal notes, adding a preface and epilogue; and he bound up with it a treatise of John Nannes, a Dominican of Viterbo, in the last century, who had advanced what Prierias had reproduced, that Daniel's fifth monarchy, the reign of the Saints, was the reign of the Papacy. To this, Luther rejoined that his scriptural researches had not led him to the conclusion that Daniel's fifth monarchy was realised in the Pope's temporal and spiritual despotism; but he was convinced of the apostolicity of the Papacy, and that it had its prototype in Judas Iscariot. "In the purple harlot of the Apocalypse, the mother of fornications and abominations of the earth, the mystic Babylon, drunk with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus, riding on the scarlet beast, full of names of blasphemy, he recognised the scriptural prediction of the reign of the Pope."

Spalatin continued to represent the duty and necessity of forbearance. But how hopeless were his efforts, the publications of each successive month, or even week, most clearly demonstrated. Treatise followed treatise, "like sparks from the iron under the stroke of the hammer,"† each spark brighter than the preceding, and adding to the fury of the fire blazing on all sides. But before the appearance of this last

* Magister palatii, was converted by the Lutherans into Magirus palatii—palace-cook.

† Ranke's Ref., trans. by Sarah Austin, I. p. 340.

mentioned publication Rome had resolved upon, or already 1520.
taken, a decided step in the affair, as Luther was very well aware, by the rumours floating in all quarters, and by direct accounts from the papal city. It was reported that a physician, well skilled in the art of poisoning by the most secret and inscrutable means, who had moreover the power of rendering himself invisible at pleasure, had been hired at a costly price by the Roman Curia to make short work with Luther. And to complete the tragedy, his advent at Wittenberg was fixed for All Saints' eve. But this is only one of the terrors which the popular apprehension conjured up. In the beginning of May tidings were received from Eck that he was almost certain of success in his enterprise; a minute of a bull against Luther had been roughly sketched; at the next consistory it would be matured, and, if the Pontiff would be guided by him, every Cardinal and Bishop should subscribe it. But the pestilent heretic's doctrines had been very inadequately appreciated at Rome before his arrival. Nor were Eck's statements, however deeply tinged with the personal braggadocio of such "an animalcule of vain-glory," as Luther termed him, incorrect as to facts. The utmost excitement of feeling prevailed at the Vatican; and Leo himself, against whom the Thomist party had long murmured in secret as not walking in the via regia of the Popes, but encouraging literature to the detriment of theology, bowed to the fury of the angry spirits around him, or was carried away by a current too strong to be resisted. Cajetan, although labouring under severe indisposition, was conveyed to every consistory, and took an eager share in the proceedings. A difference of opinion was manifested between the jurists and the divines of the Curia: the former were for citing Luther again before pronouncing his excommunication. They argued, that before the Almighty condemned Adam, he enquired, "Adam,

1520. where art thou?" So of Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" And in the destruction of the cities of the plain, "I will go down now and see."* The latter would not brook delay. But this difference was arranged by a compromise: Luther was pronounced excommunicated unless within sixty days he recanted his errors; and the famous bull of excommunication, calling on God, on Peter, on Paul, on the Saints and the whole Church, to rise up against the new Porphyry,† and which condemned forty-one propositions extracted from his works, and consigned all his books to the flames, and declared the decrees of the Universities of Louvain and Cologne most holy, was signed on the 15th June.‡

Besides other intelligence, a letter from Valentin Deutleben, the Saxon representative at the Vatican, and also a letter from the Cardinal St. George to Frederic, both which were immediately transmitted to Luther, had prepared him for this event. Deutleben told his master that all his affairs were at a standstill, for he could not obtain a hearing on account of the protection afforded Luther. The Cardinal in strong terms urged Frederic to rigorous proceedings against his heretic monk. In reply to these letters, the Reformer requested his "most illustrious Prince" not to embroil himself in his cause at all, but to keep aloof as heretofore; only to refuse to be his judge or executioner, at least until proof had been afforded of his guilt. "Whatever I have done," Luther said, "I have done upon compulsion, and have always been ready to have peace, provided the truth of the Gospel were left free. This is all I ask, not a cardinal's hat, or gold, or any of those things which at Rome they prize, but the way

* Polan. I. p. 9.

† The Bull, with Hutten's notes—Walch. XV. p. 1692, &c.

‡ The seventeenth day before July 1.

of salvation left open to Christians. I hope your illustrious 1520.
Highness will frame such an answer as to make the Roman heads comprehend that Germany, not through her own, but through Italian rudeness, has been hitherto oppressed by the secret judgment of God." The Elector's reply stated, that he had hitherto kept the accused monk near him at the desire of Miltitz, to prevent his acting with greater freedom beyond the limits of Saxony; that the challenge of Eck, and the constant attacks of his enemies, had precluded Dr. Martin from observing that silence which otherwise he had been most willing to maintain: and, moreover, that there were so many learned men in Germany, and so many students of the Bible even among the laity, that the mere authoritative sentence of the Church, without scriptural proof, would only occasion bitter offence, and give rise to horrible tumults. This was plain language for the Vatican: and from all quarters Luther's encreasing danger elicited warmer demonstrations in his favour. The knight Taubenheim placed himself at his service. Sickengen, through the medium of Hutten, offered the refuge of his castle. The Franconian knight Schaumburg,* proffered his fortress and a hundred devoted swords. There were a multitude of free spirits to whom the vision of a war against the tiara was fraught with delight.

With a grateful sense of the kindness extended to him, Luther determined nevertheless to remain at Wittenberg, and there await the explosion of the storm. He even resolved to anticipate its burst, and, with a spirit-stirring blast which should ring from one end of Germany to the other, to arouse his countrymen to a conviction of their duty and to summon especially the magistracy, the civil rulers, and the Emperor to the great work of reforming the Church. "The time for silence

* See Seckend. I. p. 111.

1520. is past, and the time to speak is come." The Appeal began with bemoaning the misery of Germany, and then passed to the promise of better times from the young noble blood just made the national head. The great work to be done, however, must be entered upon in the strength of God; for it was because he leaned on his own might that Frederic I. had been trampled under foot by the Pope; the bloodthirsty Julius II. had been raised so high because France, Germany, and Venice trusted to themselves; forty-two thousand of the Israelites fell by the children of Benjamin, because they ventured on battle in their own strength. The Papists had built up three walls against a Church Reformation; the first, that temporal power had no right or jurisdiction over spiritual; * the second, that none should read the Scriptures save the Pope; the third, that none could summon a Council save the Pope. "Now help us God, and give us one of the trumpets whereby the walls of Jericho fell down, that we may blow around these walls of straw and paper and make them fall." He demolished the walls successively. Then he drew a picture of the ruined condition of Germany, her wealth sucked up by Rome; by indulgences, annates, commendams, and countless modes of extortion, all in the name of Christ and St. Peter; so that the wonder was, not that princes, nobles, states, cathedrals, land and people were poor, but that they had ought remaining at all. All went into the Roman sack, which had no bottom. Here was open robbery; the fraud

* The Papacy, Luther would say, has painted the Church as a great ship: in the forepart the Pope and Cardinals with the Holy Ghost; the bishops, clergy, and monks aft, monks at the oars, all bound straight for heaven. But not a single layman is in the ship; all of them, kings and nobles, are in the water: many sink, but some swim to the ship and cling to it, others lay hold of ropes thrown out from the ship, and so are saved. See the Engraving, Centifol. Luther. p. 256.

and tyranny of the gates of hell; destruction of soul and 1520.
body; the groans and spoils of Christendom. Talk of war against the Turk: the Roman Turk was the fellest Turk in the world. Talk of hanging thieves and decapitating robbers: Roman avarice was the greatest thief and robber that had ever bestrode the earth. All too in the name of God! The remedies to be sought against such evils from the temporal power were that each prince, noble, or state, should forbid their subjects giving annates to Rome; that the Christian nobility should resist the Pope as the foe and perdition of Christendom, and throw his bann, seal, and briefs into the Rhine or the nearest stream; that an imperial decree should be issued prohibiting archbishops and bishops from receiving their dignities from Rome; that all causes should be tried by the civil power; that the oath taken by bishops to the Pope should be abolished; that the Emperor should no longer kiss the Pope's toe or hold his stirrup; that the Pope should leave princes and lords to govern, and, renouncing his temporal sovereignty, should preach and pray; that pilgrimages to Rome should cease; that the clergy should have their lawful wives; that man's ordinances should be done away with and God's ordinances be restored. "Hearest thou, O Pope, not all-holy but all-sinful? Who gave thee power to lift thyself above God and break his laws? The wicked Satan lies through thy throat. O my Lord Christ, hasten thy last day and destroy the devil's nest at Rome. There sits the man of sin, of whom Paul speaks, the son of perdition! What is Popery but leading souls to hell under thy name?" This appeal to secular Germany against the Papacy was commenced in June, and published early in the August ensuing. Before the 18th August, four thousand copies had been sold in that illiterate age. Before the end of August a new edition was in print, and was speedily caught up by persons of every rank and class.

1520. The storm was coming on apace; but through the blackness of its columns the form of Dr. Eck, as its guiding genius, could be distinctly seen. Every one exclaimed, "It is Eck's Bull." Its prolixity, obscurity of wording, and forensic style, were sharply criticised.* And certainly, if the policy of Rome had before been short-sighted, it was now nothing less than infatuated. There were no two more unpopular men than Aleander, the creature, so it was affirmed, of Alexander VI., the secretary of the infamous Cæsar Borgia, and subsequently engaged in the service of Leo X;† and Eck, the baffled antagonist of Luther. Yet it was to these heads of the ultra-Romanist faction, and neither of whom, to countervail other disadvantages, possessed any weight of moral character, that Rome assigned the task of conveying the bull to Germany, and providing for its publication and execution. Some Wittenberg wags immediately attacked the salient points in Aleander's reputed history. "It cannot be denied," they told the public, "but he is a clever linguist; Hebrew is his vernacular; whether he was ever baptized is dubious; but it is clear he is no Pharisee, for he does not believe in the resurrection of the dead, but lives as if body and soul would perish together. In arrogance, avarice, and lust, he is insatiate; and has found his pretended conversion to Christianity a very lucky speculation." In the case of Eck the popular indignation was still deeper, on account of the personal spleen and malice displayed in his conduct. On the other side, a persecution

* "Quasi de causâ feudali ferenda esset sententia," says Father Paul; and he observes that one of the sentences contained four hundred words at the least.—Histor. I. p. 11.

† The real cause of Aleander's appointment was, that, before he entered the service of Leo, he had been in the service of the Bishop of Liege, an Austrian partisan, afterwards named a cardinal to please Charles.

conducted in such a way raised Luther in public regard higher 1520.
than he had ever stood before, and made him the rallying point of all that was free, generous, and patriotic, as well as enlightened and Christian in Germany.

The brother nuncios had each a separate sphere of operations marked out for him. Aleander descended the Rhine, burnt Luther's writings with exultation at Mentz, and directed his course to Louvain; and the very day that the Emperor, whose coronation at Aix-la-Chapelle was shortly to take place, quitted the town, he had some of Luther's books burnt in the market-place, to make believe, the Lutherans averred, that the Emperor had ordered it. Eck, elate with his official dignity, was advancing from the more southern districts of Germany towards Wittenberg itself, to menace, and, if possible, to drive the lion from his den. In the course of September * he had copies of the bull affixed in public in Meissen, Merseburg, and Brandenburg. As the bull was aimed not only at Luther, but at his adherents also, the singular privilege had been conferred upon Eck of annexing to the Reformer's name, the names of any of his allies whom it might be particularly desirable to reduce to conformity; and he took advantage of this indiscreet indulgence to gratify his private pique. He inserted in the bull the names of six persons, all held in high respect by the public, Adelmann of Adelmannsfeld, his brother canon, with whom he had once all but come to blows in the heat of controversy; Spengler and Pirkheimer of Nuremberg, whose satirical effusions were not to pass unpunished; Carlstadt and Feldkirchen of Wittenberg; and

* The September of this year is remarkable for Melancthon's marriage with Catherine Crappin, the daughter of a Wittenberg burgher, by the advice of his friends. The scholar spoke of his wife as "a temporal chastisement for his sins, but a mild and paternal one." Luther, it was thought, made up the match.

1520. Egranus, the preacher of Zwichau, who had called the veracity of the legend of St. Anne into question. This crowning act of insolence and malice made the cup of popular indignation run over, and served to fill up whatever might be wanting, to the entire discredit of the bull. Yet, with such despotic authority was Eck armed, that out of the six persons whom he had singled from the crowd of heretics in alliance with Luther for special condemnation, the three who did not live under the protection of the Elector of Saxony were forced to yield and declare their submission to the Holy See.

But Wittenberg was unassailable. The University was exempt from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Brandenburg, and the Elector of Saxony was a tower of strength against the papal artillery. And it was of no little moment that the centre of the reforming movement was thus secure. But even elsewhere, in the ferment of popular indignation, which was shared not only by such ecclesiastics as the Bishops of Wurzburg and of Breslaw, but by many others, indeed the majority of the hierarchy, who felt the appointment of a man of no high station in the church, like Eck, to an exalted office, as an affront to themselves, the way was by no means so smooth for the overthrow of Luther's doctrines as Rome could have wished. In some dioceses the demand of the Nuncio for the publication of the bull was rejected; in others compliance was long postponed. Eck himself entered Leipsic in a triumphal mood, and boasted over his wine that he should soon bring back Friar Martin to his senses. But besides the "ox," the "he-goat," and the "wild ass," (or Ochsenfort, Emser, and Alveld,) and Duke George, and the Bishop of Merseburg, he found few supporters; in fact, within less than a year, a thorough revulsion of feeling had taken place; jeers and gibes assailed him in the streets; pasquinades met his eye on every wall, and he feared for his personal safety in a town which

had so recently exhibited the most noisy proofs of admiration 1520
for his talents, and he repaired from the general scorn to the cloisters of St. Paul's, which had before screened the humiliation of Tetzel. Even here he was still annoyed by threatening letters; and so, after forwarding the bull, together with a letter to the University of Wittenberg on the 3rd October, he fled by night to Friburg,* and thence to Coburg. But not only had Leipsic become Lutheran: at Erfurth, the students literally obeyed Luther's directions in his great "Appeal," seized the copy of the bull, tore it to pieces, and threw the fragments into the Elbe, exclaiming, "It is a bubble (bulla), let it swim." And so all-pervading was the feeling of hostility to Rome, that even in the Low Countries, under the very eye of the Emperor himself, the indications of the popular antipapal spirit could not be suppressed. At Antwerp, it was attempted to burn Luther's writings, but in vain. Everywhere, whatever had before remained unalienated from the Papacy, seemed now estranged from it; and the bull, which was intended to extinguish the Reformation for ever, gave it new life, and may be regarded as the turning act in the struggle which decided its success.

The most important question was—What part will the Emperor take in the religious warfare, which, having embroiled the states of the empire, threatened to invade his hereditary dominions? Luther had appealed from the Church to the State, from the priesthood to the laity: and Rome, in her turn, was about to invoke the temporal arm in aid of spiritual weapons whose use had outlived their efficacy. The young Emperor had sailed from Corunna on the 22nd May: on the 26th he had landed at Dover, and prepossessed the heart of Henry of England and his ambitious favourite Wolsey in his

* Walch. XV. p. 1873.

1520. favour; and from the time of his landing in the Netherlands he had been busied with multifarious negociations, and with making preparations for the war with France, which was inevitably soon to break out. The 23rd October had been fixed as the day for his coronation at Aix-la-Chapelle. Princes, nobles, and knights, the representatives of secular power, and the papal legate Caraccioli, and the commissioner Aleander, might be seen approaching from different sides the ancient city of Charlemagne. And on the appointed day, amongst a constellation of German magnificence, more solemn and gorgeous than had previously met on any similar occasion, the crown of the empire was placed on the brows of the young Prince, whose reign was destined to mark indelible traces on the future history of the world.

The ceremony was no sooner over than Charles, accompanied by the Elector of Saxony and the other Princes, retreated before the plague from Aix-la-Chapelle, and took refuge at Cologne, where he held his court. Marino Caraccioli and Hieronymus Aleander followed him thither, and pressed the immediate exercise of the imperial authority in giving effect to the papal condemnation of heresy. In some points Charles showed no disinclination to uphold the power of the Church, and consented to the conflagration of Luther's writings throughout his own dominions, which was accordingly promptly commenced, and carried through with great vigour by the clergy and monks. But when this did not satisfy the envoys, but the demand was made that the author should be led to the stake, the Emperor drew back. "We must consult," he said, "the Princes of the empire, and especially our father, the Elector of Saxony, before we can strike such a blow against a sect so numerous and powerful."

All appeared to turn once more on the decision of Frederic. The Pope had accompanied the enclosure of the bull by a

letter dated the 8th July, in which he thanked the Elector 1520.
that he had "always abhorred the attempts of that son of iniquity, Martin Luther, and had never aided nor favoured him," and then stated that, with the counsel of his venerable brethren, and of men learned in the canons and divine Scripture, "under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which in cases of such a nature has never been absent from the Holy See, we have framed a decree, inscribed in apostolic letters, and decorated with the leaden bulla, in which, from amongst the almost innumerable errors of this man, we have condemned some as plainly heretical, others as likely to relax in the minds of the simple the bonds of obedience, continence, and humility." And his Holiness requested Frederic first to exhort Friar Martin to a recantation; but, if he proved obstinate, on the expiry of the allotted time to seize and send him to Rome, "whereby he would repel no slight stain from his own, his family's, and the national honour." Such a letter was added, in the Elector's mind, to the indignities which he enumerated as already sustained from Rome, the treatment of Luther by Cajetan, the reference of the controversy, as arranged by Miltitz, to an enlightened judge effectually stultified, and the ready credence given at the papal court to a disappointed braggart like Eck. His own high sense of the obligations of truth and integrity made the Elector of Saxony feel more poignantly the unworthy conduct of the Papacy.

On the Sunday after All Saints' day Frederic was engaged Nov. 3.
in divine service in the convent of the Cordeliers before the hour of noon, and the mass had just begun, when he was accosted by Carraccioli and Aleander. The former placed in his hands the bull; and, from the praises of the Elector and his house, diverged to the benignity of the Pontiff, in transferring the empire from the Greeks to the Germans: but at this point Aleander pushed himself forwards, and with the vehe-

1520. mence of his character, designating Luther as a heretic worse than Huss or Jerome, demanded, first, that the Elector would command that Luther's writings should be burnt; and, secondly, would apprehend Luther, and either keep him captive or send him to Rome. "The Emperor and all the other Princes," said he, "assent to the Pontiff's demand; you are the only obstacle." Frederic answered by the mouth of the Bishop of Trent, that on such a momentous subject he must be allowed time for reflection, but would signify his pleasure as soon as he conveniently could.

The next day * Carraccioli and Aleander presented themselves in the convent of the Cordeliers in the afternoon, to receive the Elector's answer. Frederic replied by the Bishop of Trent as before. He stated, that in his unavoidable absence to attend the coronation of the Emperor, Dr. Eck, of his own caprice, had added in his published bull to the name of Luther the names of several others, whom he had thus wantonly exposed to extreme peril; that such conduct was inconsistent with the duties of a Nuncio; and what lively gratitude it must inspire in his own breast, might easily be imagined. He had never made common cause with Luther. He had refrained from banishing him from his University at the express request of Miltitz. But how had it come to pass, that although Luther had always been willing, under sufficient security, to appear before the Archbishop of Treves, such an arrangement had been superseded? Luther would never have written as he had done, unless he had been provoked thereto by the attacks of embittered rivals, as calumnious as they were impious. It had never been proved that Luther's writings were deserving of the flames: and it would be most unjust to burn them before he had been heard in his defence,

* Quartâ feriâ post omnium Sanctorum.

and convicted of error. And he requested, therefore, that the present course of procedure might be abandoned, and the cause committed to just, learned, pious, and unsuspected judges, and the public faith and a safe-conduct be granted Luther to appear before them in a convenient place. And then if Luther should be convicted of error by arguments, learned reasons, pious and solid scriptural proofs, he (the Elector) would act as would become a Christian and an obedient son of the Church. 1520.

The Nuncios, after hearing this answer read to them, withdrew for a while and then returned to resume their suit with unabated importunity. Carraccioli spoke of the many endeavours of the Pontiff to recall Luther to a sense of duty, and affirmed that Luther had not kept the promise which he had made: and here again Aleander took up the thread of the argument, and urged that the commission to the Archbishop of Treves had of course been extinguished by the Pope removing the cause to his own tribunal; that the Pope alone could determine a question of faith, and that he and his colleague had no alternative but as the bull prescribed to hunt out and burn Martin Luther's books; as for his person the Pontiff did not desire "to make his hands fat with his blood." * It was growing late in the day, and the remonstrances of the Nuncios were neither exhausted nor seemed likely to become so, when Frederic, on the plea of his presence being required elsewhere, broke up the audience.

The very next day the Elector of Saxony received in his apartments, by special invitation, the world-famed scholar of Rotterdam. As the prince of literature Erasmus was disposed to think favourably of Luther in the proportion in which the

* Nolit manus suas (ut Aleandri verbis utamur) ejus sanguine pinguefacere.

1520. monks reviled him; and at Louvain he had been singled out for more pointed censure than Luther himself in the oration of Edmundanus one of the Professors. He had hardly entered the room before the Elector in his straightforward way enquired his opinion of Luther. The scholar looked surprised, knit his brow, bit his lips, and was seeking time for deliberation before he committed himself by a definite answer. The Elector fixed his eyes on him, with the peculiar expression which they were accustomed to wear when he was determined to ascertain the real sentiments of the person he interrogated. "Luther," said Erasmus, "has struck the Pope on the crown, the monks on their belly." And from this introduction he proceeded to enlarge upon the facts of the controversy. Spalatin accompained him on his departure to his lodging, and prevailed on him to enter in writing the various topics on which he had touched in his conversation with the Elector. This paper is extant under the title of "The Axioms of Erasmus,"* and is a curious and instructive document in connexion with the great religious revolution. The fountain of the persecution it stated to be the hatred of literature, and the ambition of domination; the mode of persecution, the true stream from such a source, clamours, conspiracies, animosities, and virulent writings. The leaders of the persecution were all persons of suspected character; and everywhere the best men and the most imbued with the evangelical doctrine were the most favourably inclined to Luther. The good-nature of Leo must have been abused, for the bull was unworthy the gentle Vicar of Christ. Two Universities only had condemned Luther, and they had condemned without convicting him of error, and their judgments were marked by disagreements. Luther had done the utmost that could reasonably be expected, in offering

* See L. Lat Op. Jenæ.

to defend his opinions in public disputation or to submit them 1520.
to impartial umpires. The arguments of those who had written against Luther had been disapproved even by his opponents. The world was athirst for truth, and seemed impelled towards it by a preternatural force, which it must be wickedness to resist. Spalatin bade adieu to the scholar, and returned to his master, delighted to have the precious document in his possession, which in fact the timid Erasmus had scarcely given out of his own hands, before he manifested an anxiety to recall it. The interest however which Erasmus professed in Luther's behalf was real; and he exerted the influence which he conceived that he possessed with the Nuncios, (and he had been intimate with Aleander in the house of Aldus Manutius, the printer of Venice,) with more energy than was usual with him to procure a reconsideration of the question with a view to its adjustment by arbiters: and probably his vanity cajoled him into imagining that he should be selected as the fittest person, from his moderate opinions, to strike a balance between conflicting extremes of religious faith.

All this while, the leader of the Reform movement at Wittenberg, instead of cowering from fear, roused, if possible, to more activity and boldness by his own peril, and the critical state of the struggle was heaping fresh faggots on the fire which was to consume to ashes the tyrannical pretensions of Rome. Yet, with all his enthusiasm in the cause, he acted prudently. "Dr. Eck," he exclaimed, "has come into Germany with a long beard, a long purse, and a long bull; but I laugh at his bull, or rather, his bombast. I must see the seals, handle the strings, and examine the signature, or else all the noise which it has made will not affect me a straw." He asserted that the bull was not the Pontiff's, but had ema-

1520. nated from the papal inquisitors of Louvain,* the groundwork Hochstraten's, and the finish Eck's. In his private correspondence, however, he owned that he had no doubt but the bull was genuine. "Eck had been the Pope's Paraclete." And whilst it suited his purpose to question its authenticity, his answer to it was in course of preparation. He did not receive certain intelligence of its publication until the 3rd October; and on the 6th he published his "Babylonian Captivity of the Church," the exposition of his doctrinal sentiments, as the "Appeal to the Christian Nobility" had been the exposition of his views on the relation of the Church to the State. But he still wrote as if he questioned the real pontifical origin of the bull.

Two years before, he said, he had disputed and written on the subject of indulgences; and, from a superstitious reverence for the Roman tyranny, had affirmed that they were not utterly to be rejected; but *now*, he would entreat readers and booksellers to burn his treatises, and, in place of all he had advanced on the subject, to take this single proposition—"Indulgences are a wicked fiction of papal flatterers." Next, in argument with Eck, he had denied the divine, but conceded the human right of the Papacy; and he would therefore request that all his books on this topic also might be burnt to ashes, and this proposition be substituted for all he had said—"The Papacy is a vigorous hunt, led by the Roman Bishop." He next animadverted upon the contradictory and senseless abuse heaped upon him for expressing his hope that the Church would ordain the administration of the Lord's Supper in both kinds: and thence he proceeded to treat of the Sacraments. He could not any longer acknowledge seven, but only three,

* Bullam illam terrificam Lovanii natam. Acta Acad. Lovan. Lat. Op. Jenæ, I. p. 464.

viz., baptism, penance, and bread, in reference to each of 1520.
which the Roman Consistory had put Christendom under the yoke of bondage, and despoiled the Church of her rightful liberty. Or more properly, in the language of Scripture, there was but one Sacrament, and three Sacramental signs.

He first treated on the Lord's Supper, and would not allow that the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel had any reference to it; it spoke only of spiritually eating and drinking, that is, by faith, "which alone gives life." It was therefore unfairly appealed to by the Bohemians in advocating the administration in both kinds. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, however, expressly stated that Christ delivered the whole Sacrament to his disciples; and it was certain that St. Paul administered it in both kinds. Our Lord's words in Matthew were not, Eat ye all of it, but "Drink ye all of it;" and the narrative of Mark was not, They all ate of it, but "They all drank of it." As for the argument, that the Apostles were presbyters—and such words, therefore, only applied to presbyters—if such an argument were valid for refusing the cup to the laity, it must be equally valid for refusing the bread to the laity. The words of Christ, "This is my blood which is shed for you and for *many*," included in the "many" all for whom his blood was shed, whether priests or laity. And the Church had no more right to divide the Sacrament of the altar, than to divide baptism or penance. This was the first article in which Rome had introduced Babylonian bondage.

The second captivity of the Church was the doctrine of transubstantiation, which had never been heard of for twelve hundred years, but was now insisted on by the Thomist Aristotelic Roman Church as a point of faith, although, in applying to this subject Aristotle's doctrine of substance and accidents, Aquinas had been altogether ignorant what Aristotle's doctrine really is. The Scripture called the sacred elements

1520. after consecration bread and wine, and therefore, of course, they must remain bread and wine. And why should not the body of Jesus Christ be contained in the substance as well as in the accidents of bread and wine? The words of Christ, "This is my body," were enough: Christians should simply cling to the Saviour's words, exploding the idle curiosity which would investigate the mode of divine operation. The third captivity, and the most impious of all, consisted in the mass being regarded as a good work and a sacrifice, an abuse which had diffused an infinite deluge of other abuses, until a divine sacrament had been degraded to a matter of marketing, huckstering, and vile bargaining. The Lord's Supper he defined to be "a promise of the forgiveness of sins given by God, and sealed in the blood of God the Son." As a promise no works, nor strength, nor merits were required to approach it, but only faith. On the one side was the word of God promising, on the other the faith of man accepting. And the sign or memorial of so great a promise were the body and blood of Christ contained in the bread and wine.

He then turned to baptism. "Blessed," he said, "be God, who in his abundant mercy has preserved at least this one sacrament in his Church uncontaminated by human constitutions, and free to all nations and all ranks." Baptism being administered to infants incapable of avarice and superstition, its virtue and glory had been preserved from the defilement of that overreaching ecclesiastical tyranny, which otherwise would have been sure to invent "preparations* and meetnesses, reservations and restrictions, nets to catch money, so that water would be sold as dear as parchment." But although Satan had been unable to extinguish the virtue of baptism in infants, he

* "Preparationes et dignitates deinde reservationes restrictiones, et si qua sunt similia retia pecuniarum; quibus aqua non vilior quam nunc membranæ venderentur."

had extinguished it in adults, for there was scarce one who 1520.
remembered his baptism, much less gloried in it; which had occasioned that dangerous saying of Jerome, "They trust to repentance, their second raft after shipwreck," whereas "baptism is repentance." The baptized person must believe without a doubt that by baptism he is really saved, according to the Saviour's words, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The force of baptism was not destroyed by sin, but it ever remained one unbroken vessel, never split into planks, in which all sailed who should reach the wished-for haven. The baptismal formula, "In the name of the Father," &c., marked that the rite was administered not by man, but through man as the instrument, by the blessed Trinity. The sacramental sign was immersion in water; but there was no occult virtue in the word or in the water; faith in the divine promise was the submersion of the old man and the resurrection of the new; and this faith was so essential that even without the sacrament it would avail to salvation, and only "he who believeth not shall be damned." This true science of baptism had been reduced under bondage by the Pope, who was worse than the Turk.

The sacrament of penance, like the two preceding, consisted of a sign, the word of the divine promise on the one part, and faith on our part. The promise was, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, &c.—whosesoever sins ye remit they are remitted." But as he had spoken on this subject before, a few words would suffice now. The Papacy had magnified contrition beyond faith, nay, had extinguished faith altogether, whereas in truth contrition and consolation flowed out of faith. Truly "by the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept when we remembered thee, O Zion; as for our harps we hanged them up upon the willows that were there by." Might the Lord curse those barren willows!

1520. Amen. Confession and satisfaction had been made famous workshops for lucre and power to the Roman Babylon. He did not wish to do away with confession; but the true office of a priest was to preach the Gospel and take care of the poor, not to hear confessions. Any Christian might confess to another Christian. The injunction, "Tell it unto the Church," did not mean tell it to a prelate or to a priest. The true satisfaction was not whippings with scourges, vigils, and fastings, but the faith of the contrite heart and an amended life. The insatiable Roman leech cried, "Bring money, bring money, and I will sell you sin." Thus the Princes of Babylon and Bishops of Bethaven, Jeroboam's priests of Dan and Beersheba, who waited on the worship of the golden calf, had reduced the sacrament of penance under a woeful captivity.

Confirmation, matrimony, orders, and extreme unction could not be ranked as sacraments, because there was no word of divine promise on which faith could rely. In regard to ordination a priest differed from a layman in nothing except the functions of ministry; the *character indelibilis* was a mere figment; and he rejoiced that by the demolition of this figment the Papacy itself, with its characters, would fall, and "joyous liberty" return, whereby all Christians would recognise their equality, that "he who is a Christian has Christ, and he who has Christ has all things appertaining to Christ." As to extreme unction, he enquired, "why *extreme?*" Why should that be special which the Apostle makes general? Why only to the dying, when the words of St. James are, "If any be sick among you let him call for the elders of the Church?" &c.* St. James stated that the prayer and the

* James v. 14, 15. Luther, however, states, in his "Babylonian Captivity," that he questions the canonicity of the Epistle ascribed to James. This was on account of its apparent contradiction to the other Scriptures on the doctrine of faith. It seems also that in the editions

oil would be blest to the sick man's recovery; what then could 1520.
be the meaning of *extreme* unction? Alas! scarcely one priestling* now attended at the sick man's bed, not to anoint the sick, but to offer prayer; for anointing the sick was only efficacious in the apostolic age, and was now merely to be ranked with such rites as the consecrating and sprinkling of salt and water. He concluded by saying that he had heard from others who had heard it,† that bulls and Papist curses were prepared against him to compel him to revoke or declare him a heretic. If there were any truth in such reports he could wish this treatise to be a portion of his recantation, and the remainder, such as hitherto Rome had not seen or heard, should follow speedily.

If, in the "Appeal," Luther had sounded a trumpet-blast for war, in the "Babylonian Captivity" he unfurled his standard. But whilst the chasm between Rome and Wittenberg, the Papacy and Luther, was thus daily widening, it must not be supposed that Miltitz had relaxed in his efforts for reconciliation. On the 11th October, in the preceding year, he had had an interview with Luther at Liebenwerd, and found him still willing to appear before the Archbishop of Treves, under a safe-conduct, and with the Elector's consent, at which he had expressed his extreme joy. In the December following he had been favoured with an audience by Frederic at Torgau; but the displeasure of the Elector with the behaviour of the Roman Court, and his unwilling-

prior to 1525, the assertion occurs, that in comparison with the Epistles of Paul and Peter, it was a strawy (straminea) work. But see Bayle's Dictionary, III. p. 2065 (the 4 vols., folio edition, in English). Subsequently, he saw that there was no real contradiction, and accepted it as part of Scripture.

* Vix unus sacerdotulus.

† Auditum enim audio.

1520. ness to permit Luther to undertake a journey to Treves, until there was more reason to hope the sincerity of the Vatican, and a mandate had been issued to the Archbishop, had afforded little encouragement to his zeal. But even the events of the ensuing spring, the letters from Rome, finally the signing the bull, which had convinced every unprejudiced mind that the time for mediation was gone by, had not deterred Miltitz from a fresh effort. A Chapter of the Augustines had been held at Eisleben in the beginning of September; when Staupitz, timid and anxious at Brother Martin's difficulties, revisiting Saxony after a long absence, resigned into the hands of his order his Vicar-Generalship, which was conferred on John Lange. In the midst of the assembled fraternity Miltitz made his appearance, and in German, marked with a strong Italian accent, implored them to use their influence to restrain Luther, and induce him to address a letter to the Pontiff in refutation of the calumny that he had ever assailed his sacred person—"If he would do this, all would yet be well." Accordingly Staupitz and Lange waited upon the Reformer, and solicited him to write the required letter. But Luther postponed writing it until after an interview with Miltitz himself at Lichtenberg on the 13th October. There was some little difficulty in the previous publication of "The Babylonian Captivity," so he dated back the letter to the 6th September.

It was laid to his charge, he said in this letter, that he had not even spared in his rashness the person of the Pontiff: but the accusation was entirely false, for he had always used the most honourable and reverential terms in treating of his Holiness. He had defended his innocence against a calumniator like Sylvester; he had called him Daniel in Babylon; and prayed for his salvation. But Leo himself could not deny that the Roman Consistory exceeded Babylon or Sodom

in corruption; and it grieved him to the heart to contemplate 1520.
the Roman Church, once the glory of all Churches, now a den of robbers, a shameless brothel, a kingdom of sin, death, and hell, so that were Antichrist present, no conceivable addition could be made to its abominations. And if Leo, "a lamb amidst wolves, Daniel among the lions, Ezekiel among the scorpions," and three or four cardinals with him, should try to reform such flagrant iniquities, they would all be cut off by poison. Would that Leo would renounce his glory, and become a private priest, or live on his paternal lands, and leave to Iscariots that dignity which they alone were worthy of. The Church, once the gate of heaven, had become the gulf of hell: and, in one word, to be a Christian was to be not a Roman. He had given a bill of divorce to the Roman Consistory, and addressed her in the words, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still," &c.: but Satan had opened his eyes, and stirred up his minion, John Eck, a noted adversary of Christ, to attack him about one little word which he had let fall on the primacy of Rome. Under the pretence of establishing Rome's primacy, Eck had aimed to establish his own primacy among theologians; and when his expectation failed, had been driven mad with rage. For his own part he had never been opposed to peace. Cardinal St. Sixti, had he been content with exacting silence only, might have settled the dispute with a word. Miltitz, with all his assiduity, had only been able to have one or two conferences with him, and had always found him ready to keep silence. He had agreed to accept as judge either the Archbishop of Treves or the Bishop of Naumburg. But Eck must rush in and confuse everything. He concluded with exhorting Leo not to credit the flatterers who told him he had any power whatever over heaven, hell, or purgatory. What a dissimilarity between Jesus Christ and his Vicar! too truly Christ's Vicar, for

1520. "the Vicar has place where the King is absent." And Christ being absent, the Church was a congregation without Christ. What was such a Vicar but really Antichrist? This might be deemed impudence, but it was after the example of St. Bernard, whose book, addressed to Eugenius, every Pope ought to have by heart. Not to approach his Holiness empty-handed, he offered him his little tract on Christian Liberty, which he enclosed, a pledge of peace, and a sample of those studies in which he had much rather spend his time than in contention.

In writing this letter Luther acted as he ever had done, putting no obstacle in the way of peace, but not the less steadily pursuing the line of freedom and truth. It soon became impossible to pretend ignorance that the bull which had been published, and was the topic in every mouth, and by all allowed to be genuine, was the true offspring of the Roman Curia. Luther therefore ceased to dissemble, and adopting the precaution, which his position, the ideas of the time, and his past history suggested, renewed his appeal in the most solemn form from Leo X. to a future Council. On Saturday the 17th November,* at ten o'clock in the morning, in the Augustine Convent, and in the presence of "many venerable witnesses of various dioceses," amongst them Caspar Cruciger, he read his appeal from a schedule in his hand, and the notary took down his words as he spoke. "I appeal," he said, "from Leo X., first, as an unjust, rash, and tyrannical judge, because he passes judgment on me merely by his own power without the statement of causes or of information. Secondly, as in error, and obstinate in error, a heretic and apostate condemned by Holy Writ, who would have me deny that faith is necessary to the validity of the Sacraments. Thirdly, as an enemy,

* Die Saturni 17 Mensis Novembris, &c. See Lat. Op. Jenæ, II. p. 315.

adversary, and Antichrist, an oppressor of the whole of sacred 1520.
Scripture, in that he sets his naked words against the words of divine Scripture. Fourthly, as a blasphemous, proud contemner of the Holy Church of God, and of a legitimate council, because he presumptuously and falsely declares that a council is nothing in the nature of things." In proof of the truth of these assertions, he professed his readiness to appear at a given time and place against any who should contradict them. And he called upon "the Emperor, the Electors, Princes, Barons, Nobles, Senators, and the entire Christian Magistracy of Germany, for the redemption of Catholic truth, for the faith and Church of Christ, for the liberty and right of a lawful council, to stand by him and his appeal, to resist the impious tyranny of the Pope, or at least to remain quiet, and defer the execution of the bull, until he had been legally summoned, and heard by impartial judges, and convicted from Scripture and worthy documents."

His words, very little less rapid than his thoughts, Luther, on the 4th November followed up his "Appeal" by a tract against "the execrable bull of Antichrist." The bull, he complained, had gone out over almost the whole earth, before it had reached him, the object of its fury. It had so feared the light of his face, that it was only with great difficulty, by the aid of friends, he had at last been enabled to see the bat in its true shape. It was the undoubted progeny of that monster of iniquity, John Eck, a man huddled up and sewn together from lies, hypocrisies, errors, and heresies: an apostle worthy of the apostleship assigned him. He had at one time heard that the saliva of the bull was so displeasing to all men of learning, that it had been postponed, nay, suppressed. And he could not believe that Leo and the learned among the cardinals could be the real authors of such madness, not out of any respect for Rome, but lest he should be

1520. puffed up with pride, and imagine himself worthy of such glorious opprobrium for the truth. With the confidence of his whole soul he embraced the articles condemned in the bull, and pronounced that all Christians under penalty of eternal damnation must embrace them; and he declared, that whoever agreed with the bull was Antichrist, and together with all those who knew and loved Jesus Christ, he should account all such as heathens, and avoid them. Amen. "This was his recantation in answer to the bull." He proceeds to expose the unprecedented and absurd character of the bull. The Apostles, he said, in their councils had always adduced Scripture: but the bull advanced no argument of any sort, but its mere *ipse dixit*. What fool, what ass, what mole, what stock could not condemn after such a fashion with a simple *non-placet!* The bull, moreover, condemned some articles as heretical, others as only erroneous, without defining which were which; which was as good as to say, "We don't exactly know which are heretical and which are only erroneous." The bull, too, decided that those of his writings in which there was no error should nevertheless be all burnt. The infernal dragon yelled in that bull. It was a common saying, "The ass would bray better if he did not begin too high;" and that bull would have brayed better if it had not lifted its blasphemous mouth to heaven with more than diabolical impiety to condemn proved and acknowledged truth. "Where are you, most noble Charles our emperor? Where are you, Christian kings and princes? You have been baptized into Christ. Can you endure to hear the tartarean howl of Antichrist? Where are you, O bishops, and doctors?—O Leo, cardinals, and all at Rome, if you admit that this bull is yours, I must use the power, whereby in my baptism I was made a child of God, and joint-heir with Christ, built on the sure Rock; I bid, warn, and exhort you in the Lord to

return to your senses from your diabolical blasphemies, and 1520.
to put a stop to your presumptuous impieties, and that quickly. And if you will not do this, know that I, and all who love Jesus Christ, shall account your seat the seat of Antichrist, the condemned seat of Antichrist, towards which, instead of obedience, detestation and execration are due: in the name of Him whom you persecute, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Jesus Christ still lives and still reigns; and soon will he come and slay with the breath of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming this man of sin and son of perdition." And he ended with the words, "As they have excommunicated me, according to their sacrilegious heresy, so do I excommunicate them, according to God's holy truth. Christ the Judge will see which excommunication shall avail with him. Amen." *

Rome had to do with an adversary whose vigour was inexhaustible. "My thoughts," Luther himself said, "run in a stream, and have never to be drawn drop by drop: and I am a rapid penman." The stream never ceased, but was ever swelling in volume, and gathering strength. On the 1st December he published his "Assertion of all the Articles condemned by the last Bull of Leo X." In touching on the old subject of indulgences, he said, "When I first treated of them I knew not that the Pope is Antichrist, who at the bidding of Satan is ruining Christendom." When he came (in the

* Luther alluded in this tract to the report that money had been offered him to defray his expenses in journeying to Rome. He insisted, on the contrary, that "the Bank had offered money, some hundred gold pieces, but it was to assassins to slay him. But let the Bank give him money, provided it were enough to raise 20,000 foot and 5000 horse, and without caring for a safe-conduct he would appear at Rome, for then he should be sure of good faith in that city where holy fathers murdered their beloved sons, and brother brother, in true Roman style, all out of love to God," &c.

1520. thirtieth Article) to the mention of John Huss, he said, "They are incorrect in calling me a Hussite; if *he* was a heretic, I am a tenfold worse heretic: I before stated that *some*, I now state that *all* the Articles of Huss condemned by Antichrist and his apostles at Constance, in that synagogue of Satan, are evangelical." In speaking of Purgatory (in the thirty-seventh Article), he pronounced the doctrine peculiar to the Roman Church, "the most schismatical of all Churches." The existence of Purgatory was "a dream of the Pope, who knew less on such topics than the very least of believers." Under the forty-first and last Article he had been made to declare that "Prelates and Princes would do well to remove all the sacks of mendicity." He had not said "sacks," he observed, he cared not about their "sacks," for, if they had not them, they would have "vases and waggons;" but he desired the extinction of all mendicity. "What man was there, heathen or Christian, endowed with sense, who did not execrate the mendicity of laymen, how much more that of priests! Most holy Vicar of God, your tenets are utterly impious and diabolical. O Satan, Satan, Satan, woe unto you with your Pope and Papists! Farewell, guilty abomination. May the Lord Jesus visit you quickly with the brightness of his coming. Amen."

But Luther was not satisfied with reiterating his contempt for the bull, defending his own teaching, and exposing the anti-scriptural character of the Roman doctrines. Convinced that the Babylon of the Apocalypse pourtrays the Papacy, he had that text of the sacred book perpetually recurring to his thoughts, "Reward her, even as she hath rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works." In conformity with this curse on Rome, he had pronounced her condemnation in answer to his own; she had proclaimed him a heretic, and he had in turn proclaimed her heretical, schis-

matical, and diabolical; she had excommunicated him, and he 1520.
had excommunicated her, appealing to Jesus Christ as Judge. An additional requital remained. Rome had burnt his books, and he was resolved to deliver her volumes in turn to the flames; and he was well aware that if this act should be participated in by the masters and scholars of the University, it would be a demonstration to the world that Wittenberg went heart and hand with her great professor. The University reply to Eck's letter, and the bull, had been framed in the presence of Luther and Carlstadt, and in accordance with their wishes; but it was evident that an overt act of the University, marking condemnation of and secession from Rome at such a juncture, would speak with more power to the popular mind than any written document. Luther, therefore, had notices affixed throughout Wittenberg, that on Monday the 10th December, at nine o'clock in the morning, at a spot behind the poor's house, a mile and a half from the town, the Antichristian decretals would be given to the flames.

The enthusiasm elicited by the occasion even exceeded expectation. The inhabitants of Wittenberg flocked to witness the spectacle with the ready zeal of earnest partisans; and the students, not far short of six hundred in number, hastened in a troop with the still more glowing fervour of youth and scholastic interest to the place of conflagration. At the appointed time, or soon after, the pile was built up and set fire to by a Master of Arts of distinction; and then, Luther coming forward, threw first the Decretals, Clementines, Extravagants, and Canon Law, with sundry writings of Eck, Emser, and Dungersheim, and the "Summa Angelica," into the flames, and finally the copy of the bull itself, saying, "Thou hast troubled God's Holy One, and therefore may fire eternal trouble thee." Doctors, masters, students, and townsmen

1520. crowded around the Reformer, and in something like a triumphal procession attended him back to the town.

The next day, as he was lecturing on the Psalms, adverting to the recent scene, he warned his audience against the papistical statutes. The conflagration, he said, of Popish writings was nothing: the grand point to be attained was the conflagration of the Pope, that is, of the papal See itself. His brow gathered as he spoke, and he pronounced with emphasis, "Unless with all your heart you dissent from the papal reign, you cannot obtain the salvation of your souls. The reign of the Pope is so alien from the kingdom of Christ and the Christian life, that it would be safer to roam the desert, and never behold a human face, than to continue under the rule of Antichrist. Every one must look carefully to his soul's welfare, and take heed that, by assenting in any way to the Papists, he may not deny Christ. The time is come, when each Christian must choose between death here and death hereafter; and for my own part, I choose death here, and will never lay such a burden on my soul as to hold my peace, but shall think of the reckoning to be made to God. I abominate the Babylonian pest. As long as I live, I will proclaim the truth. And if the wholesale destruction of souls throughout Christendom may not be prevented, at least it shall be my labour to rescue my own countrymen from the bottomless pit of perdition."

He also published his reasons for burning the bull and the papal books. He had done so, he stated,—First, because abominable writings ought to be burnt. Secondly, because, by his baptismal vow, and the oath he had taken as Doctor of the Holy Scriptures, he was bound to use his best efforts for the extinction of error. Thirdly, because the Pope and his faction had rejected all his warnings to them. He added, that the authority for burning his writings had been purchased

of the civil power by the Universities of Cologne and Louvain 1520.
for a very large sum; and he believed that Leo X. individually, as far at least as he understood, was not responsible for it. But, as such burning might lead to a shipwreck of truth with the ignorant populace, he had retaliated on the papal books, under the influence, as he thought, of the Holy Spirit, for the confirmation and preservation of Christian verity. He annexed thirty Articles culled from the books of the Canon Law, which justly sentenced them to the flames. "The sum and substance of the Canon Law," he continued, "is this—The Pope is God upon earth, superior to every other being, celestial or terrestrial, spiritual or secular. All things appertain to the Pope, and none can say to him, What dost thou?" And such a pretension proved that the Papacy was "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place." The example set at Wittenberg, of burning the bull, told with effect throughout Germany; and in several cities, and amongst them Leipsic and Torgau, demonstrations of a similar kind declared the popular sentiments.* The humanist poets were loud in their notes of exultation.

War was now publicly declared on both sides; every barrier broken down, the sword drawn, and the scabbard thrown away. And at this point another stage may be regarded as completed in Luther's religious development. He had become thoroughly acquainted with the essential doctrines of Scripture, and had habitually taught them long before Tetzel erected his indulgence market at Juterbock; and the indulgence controversy, far from producing the Reforma-

* At Dœblin the bull was torn and disfigured, and the inscription appended, "The nest is here, the birds are flown:" at Magdeberg it was publicly gibbetted (fixus in publico palo quod Sack seu den Pranger vocant.) De Wette, I. p. 569. Pallav. I. p. 34.

1520. tion, found the Reformation already in existence, and was simply the spark which fired the train. But, from the assertion of truth, Luther had now advanced to the detection of error. From holding evangelical principles himself, and proclaiming them to others, he had been taught their application to the rest of his creed; and had discovered that, as a necessary consequence of such tenets, he must condemn the worldly status and the doctrinal system of the Church of Rome. His progress had been gradual; Romish fictions had fallen, one after another, tried by the touchstone of scriptural truth; and, in the mysterious course of divine Providence, the arguments of his antagonists had proved highly subservient to his progressive enlightenment. But it is very remarkable that he had attained very nearly to the fulness of his antipapal convictions before the ordeal of the Diet of Worms. Within the three preceding years, almost all his anti-Romanist discoveries have their date; and from that period, although to carry his conceptions into execution, to write, preach, teach the Gospel and translate the Scriptures, engrossed his whole life, his opinions, under the force of circumstances, if anything, instead of advancing, rather retrograded, if an exception be made of some few points, such as his more decisive judgment on monastic vows.

The true view of the great revolution, of which Luther was the divinely appointed instrument, is, that it was primarily a religious doctrinal movement, seconded by a literary and national movement. The people were "athirst for evangelical truth"—that was the centre around which all revolved. But it cannot be denied that the inferior tendencies of the Reformation—its literary tendency as a rebellion against scholasticism, and its national tendency as a resistance to tyranny and extortion—extended and enforced its influence. Thus Luther's character combined these three elements; although in him, as

in the Reformation itself, the religious greatly preponderated. 1520.
And in the same way Frederic of Saxony was the head of the constitutional party in Germany, the founder of a humanist University, as well as the patron of Luther and a student of the Bible. It is, however, clear that the Reformation must have proved a failure, unless the religious centre had imparted warmth and vitality to all the subordinate parts. Duke George of Saxony, for instance, was profoundly national in spirit; yet his hatred to the doctrine of grace made him the most bitter foe the Reformation met with in its career. And Erasmus, the prince of letters, notwithstanding his many feelings in common, and the early sympathy which he showed with the impulse for Reform, not being sufficiently enlightened in doctrine to steer a determined course, was ere long sucked back into the vortex of Rome.

Apart from considerations of divine agency, the chances of success, if surveyed from the point of view of the sixteenth century, held out little encouragement to the advocate of ecclesiastical reform. It is true that much had been done within an incredibly short space of time. At Copenhagen the chair of divinity was filled by Martin Reinard, the chair of Greek by Matthias Gabler, both pupils of Luther. Carlstadt spent some months there in the next year: the King of Denmark, Christian II., was disposed to favour the evangelical cause to ingratiate himself with his people. Under the Swiss Alps the Gospel plant had taken root by the instrumentality of Ulric Zwingle, and was covering with its shadow the waters of the lake of Zurich, and spreading its roots on all sides. In Germany, the most influential of the Electors, the Nestor of the commonwealth,* had so far, at least, sheltered the great

* "Germanici imperii Nestor et unicus quidem."—MELANCTHON. Bret. I. p. 284.

1520. monk. The flourishing University of Wittenberg was committed to his cause; and the current of popular sentiment had strongly set in the direction of religious emancipation. But what were all these against the gigantic power of the Church of Rome, with its long recognised authority, and with its devoted army of monks, and its subservient and interested allies in every town and village? No instance appeared on record when the Pope had failed to silence or to overthrow a religious innovator. Moreover, there was every reason to conclude that the Emperor, if not at the commencement of the struggle, yet, as it proceeded, would definitely unite himself with the Pontiff. Their cause was identified as that of authority against enquiry, and precedent against reason. As far as the burning of Luther's writings in his own dominions, Charles had already complied with the papal ban; and, in the war which was imminent against France, expediency, or rather necessity itself, must drive him into the arms of the Pontiff. Against Pope and Emperor, the spiritual and the temporal arm, how slight the resources of an isolated Prince, a newly founded University, some knights, merchants, doctors, peasants, and mechanics, with some poets and men of letters, led by a feeble and attenuated friar!

These reflections are important, in order to comprehend not only Luther's actual position, but the essential features of his extraordinary character. The improbability of success, far from exciting his apprehension, was one of his strongest grounds of hope, because, as he argued, in the inadequacy of human means, God's hand would work most surely and effectively. In regard to himself, he might doubt his continued safety from the arts and the power of Rome; and he was delighted to repeat that he was probably only an Elijah preparing the way for an Elisha, Philip Melancthon, or some other instrument to be raised up by heaven, and endued with a

double portion of the prophetic spirit. But he never doubted 1520.
for the cause. "We are standing on the threshold of some marvellous dispensation," was his certain conviction. "If they kill me," he declared, "after three days the truth will rise again." "My life will be the bane of the Papacy, my death will be its ruin." Then again, the thought of his unworthiness recurred more forcibly, and he predicted that he should not fall by the poison, the sword, or the fire of Rome, because by his sins he had forfeited the privilege, the highest glory of humanity, to be a martyr for Christ; and he should deem himself too richly blessed to be "one day the last in the kingdom of God."*

* Utinam aliquando merear ultimum membrum fieri Ecclesiæ.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE CLOSE OF 1520 TO THE END OF MAY, 1521.

1521. The great theme of conversation was now the Diet, that meeting of the States so long deferred by unexpected events, which to human apprehension must determine the fate of Luther and his doctrines. Three topics in particular pressed for decision by the national assembly: the nomination of a Council of Regency, according to the Election Capitulations, to supply the Emperor's place as often as he might be absent, and moreover retain some authority when he might be present (but this latter part of the requirement was obliged to be given up); the jurisdiction of the imperial chamber; and above all, that religious controversy which in the minds of many was so paramount as to put every other thought far in the back ground. Frederic had been requested to bring Luther with him to the Diet, but had declined the charge,* apprehending, as he hinted in his reply, peril to the Reformer from the burning of the bull; and proceeded in December with Spalatin to Worms without the great monk, whom the populace would gladly have descried amongst his train. The Emperor had then directed that Frederic should take Luther with him as far as Frankfort; but the Elector had already proceeded half way on his journey when the second letter reached him. And indeed there were not a few obstacles of a more serious nature to the popular feeling being gratified by

* De Wette, I. p. 542. See Seckend. I. p. 142. Walch. XV. pp. 2021—2028.

Luther's appearance before the highest political assemblage of the empire. On the 3rd January a second bull was issued, finally expelling him from the communion of the Church. The Papists objected to the heretic's appearing before the Diet at all, particularly now that the Church had so authoritatively and conclusively spoken, and decided that the only duty of the Diet was to decree that temporal punishment which ought invariably to follow the Roman ban. This high argument, drawn from Ultramontane notions on the relation of Church and State, was aided by other reasons. Cajetan had proved Luther's ability; and therefore a condemnation of him unheard, besides being strictly orthodox, was highly expedient. Moreover, Alcander, in his journey through Germany, had been startled at the demonstrations of sympathy with the excommunicated heretic which presented themselves on all sides. The office, the person of the nuncio, were marks for contempt from the German populace: at some inns he was refused admission; he had often to resort to the very meanest, and oftentimes on entering his apartment his eye rested as the first object on the portrait of Dr. Martin Luther over the mantelpiece. He exclaimed that "Germany to a man was Lutheran," and vowed to use all his art and eloquence to preclude the national hero from being heard in his defence before the national tribunal. 1521.

But on the other hand there were those, and some of them personages of high consequence, who were resolved that Luther should, at whatever cost, appear before the Diet. The extortions of the Papacy had been so exorbitant, and the print of its withering policy so deeply branded on the German soil, that the constitutional party were bent on not losing the opportunity which the energies of a solitary monk had supplied for instituting a better order of things in religious matters, and desired to back their own efforts by all

1521. the force of Luther's personal presence. Nobles and princes came to the Diet armed with the great "Appeal." An abridgment of it had even obtained larger circulation than the original document. It was the national mind and voice; and the man who had written it, in right of common fairness, which Germany loved, and even in gratification of that pride with which his countrymen named his name, was not to be immured or stifled in a corner, but to be heard in public. Charles himself varied according to the variations in the sentiments which were buzzed most noisily round him, and now addressed another letter to the Elector of Saxony (his previous letters he had recalled), demanding Luther's appearance at Worms. This was made known to the Reformer, and drew from him a memorable reply in declaration of his joyful assent. "I call Christ to witness that it is the cause of God, of the Christian Church, of the whole German nation, not of one man, still less *my* cause. I implore your Electoral Grace to beseech his Majesty in my behalf to grant me a safe-conduct, to prevent that violence which I have so much reason to apprehend, and to provide that the cause may be examined by good, learned, and prudent men, above suspicion, and pious Christians, both from among the clergy and laity, men well grounded in the Scriptures, and acquainted with the distinction between divine and human laws. With the security of a safe-conduct for my journey to and from Worms, I am most ready in humble obedience to present myself before the Imperial Diet and submit to be tried by just, learned, and honest and impartial judges: for in all that I have written and taught I have obeyed my conscience, my vow and duty, as a poor scholar in the Scriptures, to the praise of God, the health of Christendom, and the weal of Germany." *

* Letter of Jan. 25. De Wette, I. p. 548.

But if Charles, a very young man, and hitherto, as it 1521.
seemed, under the control of his prime minister and those about him, vacillated according as the impulse from one side was for a time stronger than that from the other, the Papist party kept steadily in view one object, constantly pursued through every difficulty, to prevent by whatever means Luther's presence. With a view to this Glapio the Franciscan, the Emperor's confessor, who represented the Reform party within the Roman pale, sought an interview with Gregory Bruck or Pontanus, the councillor of the Elector of Saxony, and with great wilyness laboured that Luther's friends might commit him, and so ruin his cause. Glapio's project was a committee of learned and impartial men to examine Luther's writings, and hear the Reformer's explanation *viva voce* of dubious or objectionable passages in them. He protested that his conviction of a Church reformation was as strong as that entertained by Luther himself, or by any one else; and he had assured the Emperor that he was called by God, under penalty of signal chastisement, to the work of reform. He stated that Luther had acted most properly in opposing the indulgence traffic; that he had read his writings with much approval, and in a certain measure they had been acceptable to the Emperor himself. Only the "Babylonian Captivity" formed an exception from this general eulogy. "He had himself, on perusing it, felt as if a scourge had struck him from head to foot; it exhibited neither the peculiar style nor industry of Luther's other writings: it could not be his; or, if it were, it must have been indited under the maddening influence of the recent bull. Luther must disown that production; and as the worst evils were not without remedy, so here a remedy would be presently found." Bruck, with the sagacity of his character, saw through the duplicity of the Confessor, and replied that the Elector of Saxony had never

1521. taken upon himself to defend Martin Luther, and that, even if he were willing to do so, Luther would be unwilling to entrust his defence to him. And when Glapio demanded a private interview with the Elector himself, the demand was courteously but decidedly declined. The conversations, however, between Glapio and Bruck were continued. The latter observed that a slight had been shown his master by his exclusion from those councils which were daily carried on in the imperial presence relative to the mode of dealing with Luther: and that his master's services in the late election to the throne had not deserved such a recompense. Glapio parried this side blow as well as he could, and returned to the business of his negociation, insisting, that on Luther's retracting his "Babylonian Captivity," the Pontiff would reverse his sentence. "But what!" Bruck exclaimed, "if when Martin's books have been deposited with the impartial umpires, who, according to your suggestion, are to settle the whole matter, the Emperor should go into Spain, and the Pontiff issue his mandate to the umpires to burn the books!" The Confessor would not recognise such an event as possible, although Aleander's views on the pontifical supremacy and independence had been already freely broached. And when Bruck finally declared that the Elector could see no mode of arriving at any decision but by Luther's personal appearance before the Diet, with a deep sigh Glapio again protested, and called God to witness the sincerity with which he desired a reform of the Church, and the grief with which he foresaw that "the noble merchandise which Luther had almost brought into port, would all be shipwrecked."* The effect

* I have preferred taking Spalatin's view of Glapio's motives to Ranke's. Spalatin says—"Luthero favere visum esse Glapionem: alios autem affirmare extreme illi infensum, et vehementer territum fuisse, cum adventare eum audisset." Seckend. I. pp. 143, 144.

of these negociations was to confirm Frederic in his estimate 1521.
of the Reformer's cause, and in the conviction that his presence before the Diet was of essential moment.

All this while, and for months previously, the imperial negociations with the Papal Court had been proceeding, and had at last reached a definite result. On the one side the Pope consented to withdraw his aid from the Spanish Cortes, and recall all his briefs mitigating the inquisitorial system in Spain: on the other side the Emperor agreed to sacrifice Luther to the pontifical vengeance. A singular bargain, by which ultramontism through the influence of the Emperor, an ultramontanist in Spain, and of the Pope, an ultramontanist in Germany, seemed effectually established in both countries. When the compact had thus been sealed in tyranny and bloodshed, Charles, one day in February, when the imperial banner had been unfurled, and everything seemed ready for a tournament, suddenly summoned the princes and nobles to his own presence, to hear read to them a brief which he had received from Rome, exhorting him to put in execution the ecclesiastical sentence upon Luther, and also the edict which he had caused to be drawn up in conformity to the Papal pleasure. It was a bold step, just such as Aleander might have prompted to secure the assent of the Diet by a surprise, and preclude Luther's appearance by the arbitrary and summary settlement of his cause. But the forms of the constitution required Charles to add, that, "if the States knew anything better, he was ready to hear them." Aleander and his party may have counted much upon the natural proneness on the part of his nobles to gratify a young and recently elected emperor; but the Diet was very jealous of prescriptive rights: even those of its members who were resolved to cling to Romish doctrine desired a reformation in externals, especially that a curb should be put on the extortions of

1521. the Vatican; and therefore time was requested for deliberation.

The subject which was uppermost in the general mind having been thus formally brought under consideration, very clamorous altercations ensued in the Diet. Pallavicini states that the Elector of Saxony and the Elector of Brandenburg, the political heads of the opposing parties, grew so warm in argument on one occasion, that the loud tone of the former could be heard beyond the precincts of the hall, and from words they had all but come to blows, "an unprecedented deviation from the respect mutually rendered by princes."* But this tale is very inconsistent with Frederic's established character for prudence and calmness; nor had he as yet so energetically committed himself to Luther's cause. On the 13th of February, Aleander proceeded to try the effect of rhetoric; and, having been exhorted by Charles and his tutor and minister, the Lord of Chievres, to "speak without fear of any one,"† delivered an oration of three hours' length in a strain of the utmost vehemence and vituperation. The Elector of Saxony was absent on plea of sickness; but he had careful notes taken of the speech.‡ The Nuncio produced an authentic copy of the bull, to remove every doubt as to its genuineness, and commenced with averring that the question really at issue was, whether the Pope should continue to wear the tiara or not. There was enough in Luther's writings to

* Pallav. I. p. 40. Pallavicini's statement is as little to be trusted that the doorkeeper, a Lutheran in heart, thrust back Aleander as he was entering the hall with a blow of his fist on his breast, *in order to divert the Nuncio's attention from the public to a private cause!* I. p. 46.

† At an earlier stage in the negociations Chievres had told Aleander that the Emperor would act towards the Pope as the Pope acted towards him.

‡ Seckendorff's account is founded on these notes. Pallavicini invents a speech for Aleander.

sanction the burning of 100,000 heretics. Besides defending 1521.
Wycliffe and Huss, Martin Luther had taught that the body of Christ is not really in the sacrament; that a Christian is not bound to obey the magistrates; that there is no such place as Purgatory, contrary to the decree of the Council of Florence, which he produced and laid before the Emperor; that every Christian is a priest, in accordance with which the "Babylonian Captivity" had just been reprinted at Strasburg, with a representation of two dogs biting one another, to denote the clergy and laity; that he had rejected monasticism; that he had blasphemed against the Saints, for he had showered contempt on the writings of Dyonysius the Areopagite; that he had called the Council of Constance "the Sink of Satan;" that he denied the freedom of the will, and made fate the arbiter of human actions. As to summoning Martin Luther to answer for himself before them, such a course must be useless, for an angel from heaven would not turn him from his errors, and he had already been cited to appear at Rome, and had refused to go thither. It was an affair exclusively appertaining to the Church, in which the laity had no right to intermeddle; and it behoved the Emperor to act as Constantine had done in the case of Eutyches, and resign the heretic to the ecclesiastical authority. The books of Martin Luther must be everywhere proscribed, and consigned to the flames; and the heresy be prevented from spreading any further, or else the Jews, the Turks, and Pagans would say, "The Christians, above all the Germans, a nation especially esteemed for piety, are disputing about their faith." Luther had vilified Rome as the seat of hypocrisy, but it must be well known that imitation brass is only in request where the true gold is held in value. The Lutherans were the scum of men; the Catholics were in every respect their superiors. And the judgment of almost every

1521. crowned head in Europe had already been given, or was on the eve of being given, against the most pestilent of heresies. He concluded with a few observations personal to himself, in reply to the allegation that he was a Jew. His family was generally known ; in the vicissitudes of life it had been reduced to poverty, but it was descended from the Marquises of Istria : he was himself of legitimate birth, for he was a Canon of Liege, and no Jew ; although, were he such, it would be far removed from a disgrace, for Christ and his Apostles were Jews. When he sat down, exhausted with his efforts, the countenances of the Papists in the Diet bore witness to their inflamed hostility to Luther ; and, as gold had flowed freely to Aleander's touch from the treasures of the Vatican, sanguine hopes were entertained that heresy would be exterminated without its author being heard.*

But the effect of the oration very speedily evaporated ; there were stern facts of papal encroachment and extortion which rhetoric could not successfully smooth away, and a few days later Duke George of Saxony himself rose in the Diet to deliver a philippic against the avarice and artifice of Rome, and the enormity of ecclesiastical abuses which these had engendered. The Duke passed in review the chief features of Roman venality and profligacy ; annates, buying and selling of benefices, relaxations for money, expectative graces, the

* Pallavicini says that the Emperor was so much moved by the speech as to tear the letter he had received from Luther to pieces, and give the pieces to Aleander to send to Rome. I. p. 46. Audin, after Pallavicini, describes Aleander as an exemplary man. Ranke, on the contrary, states that "his correspondence is a mixture of cunning, cowardice, arrogance, and every base passion." Judging, as is usual with bad men, of others by himself, he boasted that the Diet would dance to Rome's piping if they saw her gold. Hutten affirms that John Eck, the Chancellor of Treves, who questioned Luther before the Diet, had been bribed very largely.

multiplication of stations in order to prey upon the poor, in- 1521.
dulgences procurable for money, penances contrived so as to cause a repetition of the offence, civil causes drawn to ecclesiastical tribunals, heavy fines unjustly imposed for the sake of revenue, the abominable vices of the papal officials, commendams, whereby abbeys and monasteries were emptied, and their wealth went to cardinals and foreign bishops; all which "grievous perdition of miserable souls" demanded a universal reform, which could not be more fitly obtained than by a General Council, "which, with the utmost zeal, and with due submission, they implored might be convened." But the ecclesiastical members of the Diet enhanced the emphasis of Duke George's summary of abuses, by alluding, as if to screen themselves, to the existing Pope's taste for pleasure, and his consequent bestowal of Church patronage on jesters, falconers, grooms, valets, and other ministers to his whims and pastimes. The feeling on the subject became so strong that a committee was appointed to draw up a catalogue of grievances; and the result was a list of abuses under one hundred and four heads,* specified in the spirit of Hutten's writings, or of Luther's "Appeal," to which it was above all things incumbent that the knife of reform should be vigorously applied. But beyond this the Diet required that Martin Luther should be summoned to appear before them. Aleander now plied his craft with more energy than ever, for he was painfully solicitous as to the influence which the burning words of an intrepid monk might exert over an assembly which had already shown the inflammable temper by which it was actuated. The Elector of Saxony had demanded that Luther should be permitted to appear in order to explain any words or passages in his writings which might be open to censure.

* Walch. XV. pp. 2058—2114.

1521. And the Emperor, who discerned the inexpediency or impossibility of resisting the national will, contrived to steer midway between the requirements of the two antagonistic parties: he consented to summon Luther, but not for the purpose of explaining the sense of his writings, but simply to answer the questions whether the books ascribed to him were really his? and whether he was willing to retract the errors contained in them? Accordingly on the 6th March the summons to Luther to present himself within twenty-one days before the Diet at Worms, received the imperial signature. A safe-conduct was enclosed in the citation; and Caspar Sturm, the imperial herald, was despatched to be the bearer of these documents to the Reformer.

Meanwhile, Luther at Wittenberg, far from suffering his danger to engross his thoughts and depress his activities, had been engaged in the constant routine of his duties and avocations; writing as fearlessly, and preaching and lecturing* as energetically, as if neither Pope nor Emperor, but only God had his eye upon him. He had received information of the gradual progress of the counsels of the Diet from Spalatin, and in answer to the catalogue of the heretical propositions extracted from his works, which he would be required to retract, affirmed that "if he were summoned to Worms to recant, he should refuse to go; he might as well send his refusal from Wittenberg: but if he were summoned to be put to death he should go, for he would never fly and forsake God's truth." And this settled temper of confidence kept him firm and resolute, and comparatively indifferent to the result of the public deliberations. He speaks of himself at this time as "preaching two sermons a day, writing a com-

* He had proceeded in his lectures as far as Gen. xx. and to John the Baptist in the Gospels, when he was cited to Worms.

mentary on the Psalms, going on with the 'Postils,' answer- 1521.
ing his enemies, attacking the bull in Latin and German, and defending himself, to make no mention of correspondence, conversations," &c. He was translating his "Assertion" of the condemned articles into German at the request of Frederic. His Commentary on the Psalms had been commenced in 1519, and he had begun the publication of it in series, two Psalms at a time; and his pen was suspended in his comment on the twenty-second Psalm when Caspar Sturm entered and presented him the imperial citation. He had his "Postils" for the four Sundays in Advent in the press to be ready against the Frankfort fair, with a dedication to the Elector. He was also engaged in a commentary on the Magnificat.* He had been reassailed by Emser, and by Emser's friend, Thomas Murner, who lifted the pen of satire, while Emser himself wielded the more weighty pen of argument. As he considered that Jerome Emser spoke with the authority of Duke George, he condescended to reply to the "Leipsic he-goat," embracing in the same tract some observations upon Murner's jests; and Emser retorted "against the Wittenberg bull."

In addition to the attacks of these neighbour antagonists, which had become ordinary events, a controversial treatise was wafted to him from Italy through the agency of Wincesłaus Link—a work of Ambrosius Catharinus,† in defence of Sylvester Prierias' assumption that "the reign of the saints in Daniel is the reign of the Pope." Luther sent back the book to Link "by way of retaliation for having lost him so many hours in reading it," and together with it a "refutation" addressed to his friend, whom he warned against sup-

* De Wette, I. p. 562.

† Venit tandem a Norimbergâ Ambrosius Catharinus proh Deum! quam insulsus et stolidus Thomista. De Wette, I. p. 570.

1521 posing that by such an act he was subjecting himself again to his authority. Luther insisted in this refutation, that the Pope and the Papists cannot be the Church of Christ, because the gates of hell have prevailed against them. But his answer is chiefly remarkable for the more full evolution contained in it of his prophetical views. He identifies the king of fierce countenance in Daniel with the Pope, pre-eminently "the king of masks;" and then describes the twelve masks of the Papacy. He hazards * also the conjecture that "the fifth angel which sounded," in the ninth chapter of the Apocalypse, is the Roman Pontiff; the "star" which "fell from heaven," Alexander de Hales, or Thomas Aquinas; the "smoke" rising out of the pit the vapours and fumes of Aristotle's doctrines; the king of the bottomless pit, Abaddon, or Apollyon, no other than Aristotle himself. Thus the bottomless pit appeared to his fancy as the cauldron of the Papacy surrounded by the archi-magirus and his assistant ministers. Passing on to the second chapter of St. Paul's second Epistle to the Thessalonians, he declares, as he had before done, that "the man of sin, the son of perdition," is the Pope, the Vicar of God, who had raised himself above and displaced God; and then he proceeds to the delineation of the Papacy in St. Peter and St. Jude, closing with the statement that in this work† he offers to the world the other part of his recantation, which he had promised in the "Babylonian Captivity." "Christ lives and reigns, and in this confidence I shall not fear many

* Meo hic sensu periclitabor.

† Some, Audin amongst them, incorrectly assign the treatise against Catherinus to the Wartburg period of Luther's life. But the letter to Link with which it closes is dated Wittenberg, April 1. Walch. XVIII. p. 1944. The mistake has been caused by the printing having been later, when Luther made some additions. See his letter to Spalatin. De Wette, II. p. 41.

thousand Papists." At this time he was assailed also by 1521.
Latomus of Louvain, whom he answered a few months later from the Wartburg.

Thus in his own words Luther "grasped the sword with one hand, and builded the wall with the other"—"an Ehud with the full use of both his hands." * But he was not without many encouragements at this trying hour, and thousands of warm hearts throbbed with his own. He received intelligence that the printing of his "Operations on the Psalms" had been undertaken at Basle under Conrad Pellican, for the use of the Swiss. His sermons on the Ten Commandments and on the Lord's Prayer had been translated into Bohemian. Accounts also reached him that Duke Henry of Saxony and the King of Hungary would not suffer that his writings should be condemned in their dominions. The Marquis of Brandenburg, as he passed through Wittenberg on his way to the Diet, requested to see him, and held an agreeable conversation with him. Dr. Henry Schmidberg of Eilenburg left him a legacy of one hundred florins; he accepted the money as a token of favour from God; but when another legacy almost directly afterwards was poured into his lap, he drew back in dismay. "I enter my protest," said he, "with Almighty God that I will not have my reward in this life;" and he made the prior of his convent a happy man with the present of half.

And if Luther looked beyond the grating of his cell, or walked the streets of Wittenberg, it was only to witness some new pantomime by which the students marked their devotion to his cause. One of them would personate the Pope, and several others his cardinals; an ass would be led with great ceremony, from whose neck the papal bull was suspended,

* Epistle dedicating the Postils to Frederic, March 3, 1521.

1521. which was dipped with suppressed merriment in every gutter traversed in the procession: presently the Pope and the Cardinals took to their heels and fled in various directions, pelted and pursued by the crowd of students amidst jeers and uproarious laughter. And these exhibitions of the pervading sentiment in mimic forms, highly acceptable to the German taste, found imitators in most of the universities and large towns. On the other hand it was only at Meissen, Merseburg, and at Leipsic, that a counter demonstration was made by burning Luther's books; and it was exclusively the work of the priests; the people had no share in it.*

Not, however, that, amidst continual proofs of the popular enthusiasm, Luther's feelings were not painfully lacerated by instances of individual timidity. Staupitz, who was receding farther and farther from Luther, as the Reformer's doctrines were more clearly developing and becoming more and more decidedly anti-Romanist, had been accused to his friend the Archbishop of Salzburg, by the Pope, as an ally of the Wittenberg monk, and in reply had declared his submission to the Holy See. So much was the Reformer grieved at this pusillanimity that he addressed a letter on the subject to Staupitz, in which affection seems to vie with remonstrance. "*You* have too much humility, and *I* have too much pride. Let me be found guilty of every sin there is or can be rather than of impious silence at a time like the present, when Christ is in his agony, and says, 'I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.' I fear that you will continue to vacillate midway between Christ and the Pope, who are diametrically opposed. Indeed, I am not a little vexed at your recent submission, whereby you have shown yourself another man from the Staupitz who once

* Bretsch. I. p. 361.

preached grace and the cross. Philip salutes you, and prays 1521.
for you an increase of courage. Your son, Martin Luther."*
Reuchlin too showed himself very cautious, and requested Melancthon not to write to him, that he might not incur suspicion. Another defection was that of Adrian, the Hebrew Professor, who removed from Wittenberg to Leipsic, now that Luther's affair was growing serious; but this was a loss which few regretted.†

If some, like Staupitz, were dejected, and step by step returning to Rome, there were others who were for wildly rushing into the counter extreme, and settling religious differences by the sword. Hutten, the little valiant knight, who had singly repulsed five Frenchmen who set upon him at once when he was returning from one of his enterprises, was the mouthpiece of this warlike party, and had formed, in conjunction with Sickengen, a plan of the campaign. These counsels were as offensive to Luther as the timid drawing back of Staupitz. He knew that his own life was in imminent jeopardy, but the very last means by which he would purchase peace was bloodshed. His words are very memorable. "Hutten," he wrote to Spalatin, "would contend for the Gospel with violence and carnage. I decline any such instrumentality. The world was conquered by the Word, the Church saved by the Word, and by the Word it must be renewed. Antichrist must be *broken without hand* by the Word." And in reliance on the power of the Word, and of that God whose Word it is, he was prepared to go to Worms, and face the Emperor, the Nuncio, all the stratagems and perils of Satan; but not a sword or a hand was to be moved in his behalf. "The will of the Lord be done."

It was on the 24th March, or some say on the 26th, that

* De Wette, I. pp. 557, 558.

† The Hebrew professorship thus vacant was given subsequently to Aurogallus.

1521. Caspar Sturm, the imperial herald, passed through the streets of Wittenberg. The Elector of Saxony had furnished him with a safe-conduct for Luther;* but that was a point of small moment, as everywhere in Germany, and how much more in Saxony! the great monk was the object of popular idolatry. It seemed likely to be a more important precaution that Frederic directed the magistrates to provide by every means in their power for the safety of the herald, and if necessary appoint him a guard; but, although considerable excitement prevailed at Wittenberg, order and tranquillity reigned there. Luther's feelings were thoroughly understood; and those who feared for his safety were scarcely disposed to wrong the Reformer or his cause by denying him the glory of bearing witness to the truth at Worms. But a few days' delay was requisite for completing preparations for the journey, and making arrangements for supplying Luther's place during his absence, in the lecture-room and in the pulpit. It was a providential coincidence that just at this time Bugenhagen, or Pomeranus, so called because the town Wollin, in Pomerania, was his birthplace, came to Wittenberg, a fugitive from the persecution of the Bishop of Camin. His conversion from Romanism had been very recent. At Treptow, where he was Rector of the Grammar School, he was seated at table with the Inspector of the Church, in company with other guests, in the closing month of 1520, when the "Babylonian Captivity" was placed in his hands, and his opinion enquired as to its merits. He turned over a few pages as he sat at the table, and exclaiming that "the author of that book was the most pestilent heretic that had ever vexed the Church," read aloud some of the statements which it contained. But he took the book home with him, perused

* Luther had also a safe-conduct from Duke George. Walch. XV. p. 2126.

it more attentively, and after a few days returned to his for- 1521.
mer messmates, with an apology for the hasty judgment which he had expressed, since "on closer study he had become convinced, that the whole world was wilfully blind, and was plunged in Cimmerian darkness, and Luther alone saw the truth." The arrival at Wittenberg of this warm-hearted and learned disciple, a man after his own heart, who earned the distinctive title of "*the* Priest or Pastor," rendered Luther's mind easy as to the provision to be made for theological lectures in his absence, and inspired him with renewed gratitude to God. His pulpit ministrations he assigned to Feldkerchen.* He had now only to think of his journey; and it was agreed that John Pezenstein, an Augustine brother, Nicolas Amsdorff, Jerome Schurff, a professor of law, and Peter Suaven, a young nobleman from Denmark, who lodged in Melancthon's house, at their own anxious solicitation, should be his companions to the scene of his trial. And on Tuesday in Easter week, the 2nd April, bidding an affectionate farewell to Melancthon, who reluctantly remained at Wittenberg,† and to the many friends who were assembled to witness the departure, Luther and his companions mounted the waggon which the town council had provided for him at their own cost, with every regard to his own dignity and the honour of the cause of which he was the champion, and proceeded on their road. The herald in the insignia of his office rode first; his servant on horseback followed; and Luther and his comrades came last in their waggon, which could be either opened or covered at pleasure.

The same day they reached Leipsic, where the only civility shown was that the customary compliment of wine was offered to them. The next day they proceeded to Naumburg, where

* So I gather from Luther's letter. De Wette, I. p. 589.
† Bretschneider, I. p. 365.

1521. Luther and the herald were entertained at table by the burgomaster Græssler. He left Naumburg early on the morrow, and a priest of that town sent after him a present, a portrait of the Italian Reformer Savonarola, accompanied by a letter, in which he exhorted Luther "to be manful for the truth, and stand by God, and God would stand by him."* Luther took the portrait in his hand, gazed on the features, and imprinting a kiss, repeated what he was wont to say as often as the Italian Reformer was spoken of, that Savonarola had been a true servant of Jesus Christ. On the 4th April, they arrived at Weimar, where Luther had an audience with Duke John, who had from the first espoused his cause more openly than his brother the Elector, and from whom he received money for his journey: and he preached before him at his request. But at Weimar a new spectacle met his eyes. The very day after the citation to Luther to appear before the Diet had been signed by the Emperor, an edict requiring every one who had any of the Reformer's writings in his possession to carry them to the magistrates, also received the imperial signature. It was a sop to the Papists, whom Charles was eager to conciliate, after that their wishes in reference to Luther's non-appearance had been set aside; but it was equivalent to prejudging the cause and pronouncing condemnation on Luther as a heretic, and had been employed by the Romanists as a means of erecting yet another barrier against an event so dreaded as his presence. In the streets of Weimar officials were seen affixing this edict to the walls. The herald turned round and looked at Luther, and in a hesitating tone enquired, "Well, Doctor, will you go on?" "Yes," Luther returned; "though they should kindle a fire between Wittenberg and Worms to reach to heaven, I will go on. I will confess Christ in Behemoth's mouth between his great teeth."†

* Mathes. p. 41. † Walch. XV. p. 2173.

The journey was next to Erfurth, which, in a letter addressed to John Lange previous to leaving Wittenberg, the Reformer had anticipated that he might be debarred from entering; but his reception was more cordial there than it had been in any town which he had passed through. The Rector of the University, and with him Eoban Hess and Jodocus or Justus Jonas, a licentiate of law, and many others, in all a cavalcade of forty horsemen, met him at a distance of about two miles from the town-gate, and conducted him on his way and through the streets; and at the gate a number of country people and of the town folk had assembled, who, as he passed, loudly cheered him. There was, indeed, much at Erfurth to excite half-painful, half-pleasureable sensations: the University in the library of which he had first found the Bible, the cell which had witnessed the vivid struggles of his earliest convictions, and outside the town the spot where religious impressions were fastened on his soul in the terrors of the thunderstorm. But not only these, every object in the old town suggested a prayer or excited a reminiscence. He passed through the graveyard, and marked a little cross of wood above the remains of a brother of his order, whom he had known intimately, and who had fallen asleep in Christ, and pointing it out to Justus Jonas observed, "How calmly he sleeps, and I ——." He sat down on the gravestone, and remained in deep meditation for a long time, until he was at length interrupted by Amsdorff and warned of the lateness of the hour. The next day, the 7th April, was Sunday; and he was earnestly requested to preach.* The Emperor had indeed prohibited him from preaching on the way, but nothing 1521.

* Audin says, with wilful falsehood, II. p. 86, "He demanded and obtained permission to preach." Seckendorff expressly states, "Instanter rogatus concionem habuit." I. p. 152. And it was Luther's maxim never to preach without a call.

1521. was clearer to his conscience than that he was bound to obey God rather than man; and that God's word could not be bound; and Caspar Sturm, whose inclination to Lutheranism had ripened into a settled persuasion by his intercourse with the Reformer, was not disposed to assert his authority to prevent a step from which he promised a blessing to himself and others. But had he attempted it, it would have been in vain. The little church of the Augustines at Erfurth was filled to overflowing on the report that Luther would preach; and it is related by Selneccer, that in the middle of the sermon part of the outer wall of the sacred building fell down with a loud crash. The congregation were using all haste to escape from the scene of danger; but Luther raising his hand and elevating himself in the pulpit, called them back and exhorted them to composure. "Do you not understand," he said, "that this is a machination of Satan to hinder you from listening to the word of God? Remain. Christ is with us." They returned to their places, and the Reformer continued his discourse, which treated of the folly of trusting in human merit, and directed a severe censure against the vices of the clergy, amidst perfect tranquillity. It appears that he preached also in other towns and villages, as at Gotha, where Myconius relates* that the devil in his wrath threw down some stones from the church gable which had remained firm for two hundred years; and Varillas mentions a town by the name of Andors, which is however not to be found in any map, either ancient or modern, where he delivered a sermon with so much effect, that when it was concluded the inhabitants to a man declared themselves converts to the evangelical doctrines. On leaving Erfurth the party was increased by the addition of the schoolmaster Euricius Cordus, and of

* Walch. XV. p. 2172.

Justus Jonas, Professor of Law, who had contracted a warm friendship for Luther, and would not be deterred by any dissuasion from accompanying him to his trial. 1521.

From Erfurth he passed through Gotha to the Benedictine convent of Reinhardsbrunn, where he rested for the night; and so on to Eisenach, over ground every step of which echoed to the recollections of childhood. "Are *you* the man who has taken upon him to reform the Papacy?" said an officer of the Emperor to Luther at one of the inns on the roadside, looking him hard and contemptuously in the face; "are you the person about whom there is all this noise?" "Yes," the Reformer replied, "I am the man; my reliance is placed in God, whose word and command I am obeying." "Ah!" rejoined the officer, abashed by the gentleness yet firmness of the reply, "there is something in what you say. I am myself a servant of the Emperor, but you serve a Master greater than mine." At Eisenach Luther was seized with severe illness, and it was found necessary to bleed him: the Schulthess John Oswald administered a cordial which had the effect of throwing him into a profound slumber, from which he awoke very much revived, and with the malady abated. But for the remainder of the journey he suffered severely from illness. From Frankfort on the Maine he wrote to Spalatin on Sunday the 14th April, not cheerfully, but with undiminished fortitude, "All the way from Eisenach I have been, and still am languishing with sickness, in such a way as I never experienced before. That the mandate of the Emperor was published to terrify me I am well aware. But Christ lives; and we shall enter Worms despite all the gates of hell, and all the powers of the air. I send you copies of the imperial letters. It has not seemed good to me to write more until I shall be present and see what must be done, that I may not inflate the pride of Satan, whom I am resolved on

1521. the contrary to contemn. Prepare my lodging for me. Fare thee well." Luther was too ill to derive much comfort from the incidents which Cochlæus enumerates, that "wherever he went a crowd thronged to see him: in the hotels at which he rested there were drinking healths, good cheer, and the delights of music: and Luther himself played on his lute, and, like another Orpheus, but an Orpheus shorn, and wearing a cowl, drew all eyes upon him."* The Reformer paid a visit to the school of William Ness, the eminent geographer, at Frankfort, and pronounced his benediction on two of his most promising pupils presented to him by the master. But the enthusiastic reception which greeted him at every corner of the streets, the multitude who thought themselves too happy to look in his face, and only envied those who approached near enough to press his hand, produced such an influence on the fears of Cochlæus, the Dean of Frankfort, that Luther had not long quitted the town, when he hastened after him to Worms, bent on aiding the counsels of a congenial spirit such as Aleander, and resolved, as he said, if need should be, to lay down his life in defence of the Roman Church.

However, the papistical faction of the Diet were not content without making one more effort to prevent Luther from entering Worms. The imperial mandate for the destruction of his books had failed of one part of the object which the Romanists had sought by it: but they reminded one another that natures which are the least open to the influence of terror are often the most easily won over by a show of kindness. Glapio, the Emperor's confessor, the connecting link between the party of extreme, and that of moderate Papists, and who was peculiarly adapted by his character, and the sentiments which he ostentatiously professed, for the task of

* Acta et Scripta, L. p. 31.

mediator, and together with him the imperial chamberlain, 1521.
Paul von Armsdorf, suddenly left Worms for the Castle of Ebernberg, the residence of the knight Francis Sickingen. Glapio with little difficulty induced Sickingen, who probably had his own reasons for welcoming his advice, and in fact had already invited Luther to his fortress, to give his countenance to the scheme which he had devised,* which was to divert Luther from his journey to Worms to Sickingen's fortress, where, in a private interview, differences might be adjusted, and through his own paramount influence with the Emperor the whole matter be satisfactorily arranged, without in any way either compromising the Reformer, or exposing his person to the perils which must await him at Worms. Sickingen's chaplain was Martin Bucer, one of Luther's Heidelberg converts, the very man to fall in readily with Glapio's suggestion, and second the proposition with the utmost ardour. Bucer was deputed to be the bearer of Sickingen's invitation, and of Glapio's expressions of cordial good will to Luther; and he came up with the Reformer and his party when they were not far from Oppenheim. Luther's companions were at once moved by Bucer's representations, and gladly caught at Glapio's assurance, that every difference should be accommodated without the Reformation or its author being imperilled. "Let us go," they turned to Luther and said, "to Ebernberg: we can rely upon Sickingen and Bucer: your life will be forfeited at Worms." But the Reformer never wavered for an instant. "My reply is," he said to Bucer, "that if Glapio has ought to communicate to me, he will find me at Worms. I obey the Emperor's command." In fact, the twenty-one days allowed in the safe-conduct were within

* Luther attributed the scheme to the Archbishop of Mentz. Walch. XV. p. 2171.

1521. three days of expiring; and had he turned aside to Ebernberg Castle, he would have been after that period at the mercy of his enemies.

But shortly afterwards another messenger greeted Luther and his company, sent from Spalatin, whose fears for his friend's safety, shared in some measure by the Elector himself, had been wrought to a high pitch by all that he saw and heard, which the Romanists studiously contrived should impress their adversaries with the worst forebodings. "Carry back this answer to your master," Luther replied to the messenger, and wrote down the words on paper: "that I am resolved and fixed to enter Worms in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, although as many devils should set at me as there are tiles upon the housetops."*

At Pfifflingheim, very near to Worms, the Reformer was overcome with fatigue, and lay down to refresh his energies with a brief slumber, on a spot near which a young elm (since celebrated as Luther's tree) † was planted in memorial of this repose, on the eve of the eventful struggle. Luther prayed that "his doctrine might increase, and grow like the branches of the elm." When he awoke from his sleep he found numerous country people, who had gathered from all quarters on hearing that he was in the neighbourhood, anxiously expecting his rising—a glorious opportunity of proclaiming to them the Gospel of God, which he did not permit to pass unemployed. After his discourse some of them drew close around him, and reasoned with him on the hazard he was incurring in

* The Acta Wormatiæ have it differently—"Mihi vero, qui vocatus sum, decretum et certum est ingredi urbem in nomine Domini Jesu Christi, etiam si scirem tot Diabolos mihi oppositos quot sunt tegulæ in omnibus totius orbis tectis." Lat. Op. Jenæ, II. p. 412. See De Wette, II. p. 139. Walch. XV. p. 2174.

† This tree was struck by lightning in 1811.

venturing to present himself before the Emperor and the 1521.
States at Worms. The case of John Huss gave small warrant for the security of a safe-conduct. He smiled at their remonstrances, but answered in the spirit of the sentiment with which he habitually solaced his misgivings, that, if his foes should burn *him* to ashes, at least they would be unable to burn the truth with him.

Continuing his route, about ten o'clock on Tuesday the 16th April, he beheld the walls of Worms.* The herald, with his

* Audin writes—"A la vue des vieux clochers de la ville, il se leva debout sur son chariot et se mit a chanter cet hymne, dont il avait, dit on, improvisé les paroles et la musique à Oppenheim deux jours auparavant: C'est la Marseillaise de la Reforme." II. p. 90. Notwithstanding that this celebrated hymn does not appear in the editions of Luther's hymns until 1529, I believe, with M. Audin, Peter Busch, and others, that it was composed at this time, and not, as is generally thought, some years later, when the Reformer was at Coburg. Because—1. The words are in themselves far more applicable to this than to any other period of Luther's career. 2. The same vein of thought runs through this hymn as the prayer which he framed expressly for this occasion; and in some instances even the expressions are identical. 3. He wrote to Melancthon from the Wartburg—"Sing by night the song of the Lord which I sent to you: I will sing it too; let us be only anxious for the word. 'Canticum Domini in nocte mandatum canite; concinam et ego: tantum pro verbo soliciti simus.'" De Wette, II. p. 10. To what hymn can allusion be here made but to his paraphrase of the 46th Psalm, "Ein feste burg ist unser Gott," &c., which answers exactly to the description, "canticum Domini?" And it is well known that whenever tidings of any calamity to the Reformation reached Wittenberg, he used to comfort his friends, "Come and let us sing the 46th Psalm." The following is an attempt to translate this noble hymn; the pith and spirit of which it is hopeless to think of transferring to a translation:—

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,	A tower of strength is God,
Ein' gute Wehr und Waffen,	A shield on every side,
Er hilft uns frei aus aller Noth,	A sure defence the Almighty rod,
Die uns jest hat betroffen.	Let what e'er will betide.

1521. tabard embroidered with the imperial eagle, preceded; Luther, in his monk's dress, followed, with his comrades in his waggon; and Jonas and another of the party came behind on foot.* Several of the Saxon nobility, Bernhard of Hirschfeld,

Der alte böse Feind
Mit Ernste er's jest meint.
Grots' Macht und viele List
Sein grausam Rüstung ist,
Auf Erd' ist nicht sein's Gleichen.

Old Satan grim and fell,
In sooth he knows it well!
His wily plots, his triple mail,
'Gainst him are all of light avail.
On earth there's none beside.

Mit unsrer Macht ist nichts gethan
Wir sind gar bald verloren.
Es streit't für uns der rechte Mann
Den Gott hat selbst erkoren.
Fragst du wer der ist?
Er heitsett Jesus Christ,
Der Herre Zebaoth,
Und ist kein andrer Gott,
Das Feld muts er behalten.

Our toil and pains are empty cost,
With human might all's quickly lost.
He fights for us, and fights alone,
God's chosen true eternal One.
Ask'st thou his name? He's God's own Son,
Christ Jesus, Lord and King,
Of Sabaoth God, save Him
None other God and King:
The field he keeps, the victory won.

Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär',
Und wollten uns verschlingen,
So fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr
Es soll uns doch gelingen.
Der Fürste dieser Welt,
Wie sauer er sich stellt,
Thut er uns doch nicht;
Das macht; er ist gericht't
Ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen.

And though the world with devils swarm,
With open mouth and fierce alarm:
Their wildest rage can nought us harm:
Their spite and guile shall perish.
The haughty Prince of this world's den
Can work no hurt to faithful men.
How grim soe'er he look,
One word from out the book,
God's book, will make him vanish.

Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn
Und kein'n Dank dazu haben.
Er ist bei uns wohl auf dem Plan,
Mit seinem Geist und Gaben.
Nehmen sie uns den Leib,
Gut, Ehre, Kind und Weib:
Lats fahren dahin!
Sie haben's kein'n Gewinn
Das Reich muts uns doch bleiben.

God's word! no fiend shall quench its force,
No thanks for that! unmoved its base.
He guides us safely in our course:
At every turn we feel we trace
His Spirit's gifts, his Spirit's grace.
Let them take child and wife,
Let them take gold and life,
Small is their utmost gain:
Our wealth shall still remain.

See M. L.'s Geistliche Lieder von Wachernagel, p. 55; and Anhang, p. 155.

* See the account of Veit Warbeck, an eye-witness, in Seckendorff, I. p. 152

John Schott, and Albert of Lindenau, and many of the 1521.
courtiers of the princes in attendance on the Diet, were waiting the Reformer's arrival outside the city, and formed an escort or guard round his waggon in the procession through the streets. The inhabitants were all at their noon-day meal; but as soon as the watchman on the church tower descried the costume of the herald, he blew his trumpet, and in a few instants the deserted streets were moving with a crowded scene of human heads—Germans, Spaniards, and Italians, peasants, nobles, princes, and mechanics, mingled in the throng to witness the entrance of the monk of Wittenberg.

The first sight which confronted his eyes in the streets of Worms was a mournful and ill-omened pageant. A man, dressed in grotesque attire, appeared, bearing a cross, as is customary in Popish countries before a corpse carried out for interment, and chaunting in dismal cadence notes which sounded like a prophetic requiem—

> "At length thou art come, O longed for one,
> In our dark abode we waited thee."

But the crowd was vast and impatient, and, hurrying each before his fellow to catch a glimpse of Luther, soon shut out from view the lofty cross and the strange bearer, who was no other than Beffler, the court fool of one of the Dukes of Bavaria, who chose this quaint style of representing his sense of the transparent folly of a poor monk in doing battle against the great ones of the earth. Luther's waggon moved with much difficulty through the increasing throng, and at length halted before the hotel of the Knights of Rhodes, (on the same side of the street, and very near to the inn known by the sign of the Swan, in which the Elector Palatine was lodging,) where the Electoral Councillors, Frederic von Thun, and Philip von Feilitsch had taken up their quarters, with whom the Re-

1521. former was to share accommodations. Almost directly after his arrival, he sent information to Glapio, that if he desired to speak with him, he was now in Worms, but received the answer "that an interview would no longer be of any use." The Elector of Saxony received the intelligence of Luther's arrival with manifest pleasure; the Archbishop of Mentz looked blank with astonishment.* General opinion had predicted that Luther would never dare to enter Worms.

There was no rest for Luther after the fatigues of travelling and the harass of excitement. All the evening, and until deep in the night, visitors in unprecedented numbers, so that, as the Elector Frederic said, "never was prince so honoured," flocked to the hotel to feast their curiosity with the spectacle of one whose daring and reputation contrasted so forcibly with his humble origin and poverty. Princes, counts, barons, knights and nobles, priests and laymen, are stated to have jostled one another at this unanticipated levee of the Reformer; and as one tide of visitants ebbed, there was a full flow of more to supply their room. William Duke of Brunswick, and Prince William of Henneburg, are expressly mentioned among the shoals of the curious. The surprise was universal at the striking serenity of the Reformer's countenance, which, to some, seemed to breathe divine peace, to others bore the impress of Satanic temper and resolution. Luther was prevented from retiring to rest until a very late hour, and he slept that night but little: he walked up and down his chamber, turning to the window and looking up at the starlit heavens, as was his custom when engaged in meditation and prayer; and sometimes he touched his lute, and the air and words of some of his favourite hymns deepened his composure.

* "And had I been as great a coward as the Archbishop of Mentz," Luther observed, "no doubt I never should have come."

At eight o'clock the next morning, Ulric Pappenheim, the 1521.
imperial hereditary Grand Marshal, who was lodging in the same hotel, officially cited Luther to appear at four o'clock in the afternoon of the same day before his Imperial Majesty and the States of the empire, to hear for what purpose he had been summoned. The forenoon of Wednesday, the 17th April, the Reformer employed in prayer, beseeching God to carry through and determine his own cause: and when the Grand Marshal with the herald appeared to conduct him to the Diet, he was in readiness and quite calm. The herald preceded; then the Marshal; and Luther followed. The windows of the houses along the route were blocked up with tiers of faces; and the roof tops here and there were covered with spectators. But it was soon evident that, from the density of the crowd, a passage through the streets would be attended with great difficulty; and, accordingly, the herald adopted a circuitous route, and conducted the Reformer through the garden of the Knights of Rhodes along the backs of houses, and led him by a private staircase directly opposite the Town Hall, in which the Diet was sitting. But even so the populace rushed through the alleys and courts, and even forced their way through houses to obtain a sight of "the wonder man." At the Town Hall the multitude formed a complete block, and it was necessary that a path should be cleared by the imperial soldiery; but, as Luther passed, some voices from the crowd declared the popular sympathy—"Blessed is the womb that bare thee." In the vestibule of the Town Hall not only the area, but every vacant niche and window recess were filled with courtiers or their dependents, who were so lucky as to obtain admission. And at the door of the room Luther was met by the veteran George Freundsberg, whose name with the Germans of that age was the symbol of gallantry. "My monk, my good monk," the great soldier said, putting

1521. his hand on Luther's shoulder, "you are going a path such as I and our captains in our hardest fight have never trodden. But if you are sure of your cause, go on in God's name; fear not; He will not leave you."

The doors of the room were thrown open, and Luther was ushered into the presence of the full array of the assembled wisdom and grandeur of the empire. The Emperor had the three ecclesiastical Electors on the right of his throne, the three secular Electors on the left; at his feet on either side the two Nuncios; his brother Ferdinand sat on a chair of state a step below the throne. The sun, verging to its setting, was streaming full on the scene of worldly magnificence, so strangely varied by every colour and form of dress. The Spanish cloak of yellow silk, the velvet and ermine of the Electors, the red robes of Cardinals, the violet robes of Bishops, the plain sombre garb of the deputies of towns and jurists, and the monk's shorn head, were encircled with the dark flashing line of the mailed chivalry of Germany. A profound stillness marked the universal interest and anxiety, which was interrupted for a moment as Luther entered, by many of the Germans rising from their seats—a movement of homage rather than of curiosity, which even the presence of the Emperor failed to restrain. And then the silence was as unbroken as before.

Luther seemed at first bewildered; on observing which, some of the nobles near him whispered, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." "When you are called before governors and kings, do not premeditate, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom," &c. "Only speak," said Pappenheim, "in answer to the questions put to you." The guards moved on clearing a way; and presently Luther stood immediately in front of the throne of Charles V.

Those assembled in the hall included the Emperor, the 1521.
sovereign of half Europe, besides illimitable territories across the Atlantic; his brother, the Archduke Ferdinand, who had been placed over the five Austrian duchies, and was subsequently King of the Romans, and finally wielded the sceptre of the empire; six electors, each a sovereign prince; twenty-seven dukes, two landgraves, seven margraves, twenty-one archbishops and bishops, besides abbots; the deputies of ten free cities, princes, counts, barons, eight ambassadors, amongst them the representatives of England and France, and the two nuncios of his Holiness, in all more than two hundred personages of the highest rank in Germany or Spain.* And in the midst of this assembled group of earthly potentates there stood a man worn out with toil and study, and enfeebled with recent sickness, in his monk's frock, on whom every eye was bent, from Charles to his guards, who was there arraigned because he had dared to remind mankind of the supreme authority of God's Word.

It was expected that Glapio, the Emperor's confessor, would be the spokesman of the Diet: but instead of this, John Eck, the Chancellor of the Archbishop of Treves, a distinct person from the theologian, rose, and in a sonorous voice repeated, first in Latin and then in German, these words:— "Martin Luther, his sacred and invincible Majesty has cited you before his throne, according to the advice of all orders of the Sacred Roman Empire, to interrogate you on two subjects. First, whether you acknowledge these writings," and as he spoke he pointed to a bundle of books in Latin and German, "which bear your name, to be yours. And secondly, whether you will retract and recall them and their contents, or on the contrary will persist and persevere in them."

* Walch. XV. pp. 2225—2231.

1521. Jerome Schurff, the lawyer, was by the side of his friend, and cried out aloud, "Let the titles be read." The Chancellor read the titles of the treatises, mentioning among them Luther's Commentary on the Psalms, on the Lord's Prayer, his tract on good works, and other writings not of a controversial nature. After which Luther replied, not without a little faltering and indistinctness of voice, first in Latin and then in German, as follows:—"His Imperial Majesty proposes to me two questions. As regards the first, I cannot but confess that the books just named are mine, and I will never deny any of them. As regards the second, since it is a question concerning faith, and the salvation of souls, and affects the Word of God, than which nothing is greater in heaven and in earth, which we are all bound to revere, it would be alike rash and dangerous to advance anything without due consideration, for I might say less or more than the circumstances and the truth warrant, and in either case I should fall under the condemnation of Christ: 'Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven.' I therefore as a suppliant implore his Imperial Majesty to grant me time for deliberation, that I may answer the enquiry without wrong to the Divine Word, and hazard to my own soul."

The Diet rose to consider this request. Charles and his ministers retired to one chamber; the electors and the princes to another; the deputies of the free cities to a third. The Emperor had eyed the Reformer very narrowly, and before rising observed to a courtier near his person, "Certainly that man would never make a heretic of me." After a short time spent in consultation, the members of the Diet returned to their seats. It was agreed that the request should be granted. Eck again rose and said, "Martin Luther, although you might have understood from the imperial man-

date for what purpose you were summoned, and on that ac- 1521.
count are unworthy to have a longer time for deliberation allowed you, nevertheless his Imperial Majesty, of his innate clemency, grants you an indulgence of one day, and commands you to appear to-morrow before him at the same hour, on condition that you answer not by writing, but by word of mouth." Luther bowed his acknowledgments; and the herald came forward, and conducted him back to his hotel.

In the seclusion of his own apartment Luther sat down to indite a letter to the imperial councillor Cuspinianus, in which, after a brief statement of what had just passed, and a reference to the ordeal of the morrow, he adds, "I shall not retract an iota, by the grace of Christ." Meanwhile the fermentation in men's minds, which the events of the day and the anticipation of the conclusive scene of the next day had heightened to intensity, resulted in considerable uproar and commotion in the streets of Worms. The Spaniards of the middle class sympathised cordially with Luther; for the exertions of their own Cortes against the Inquisition and its functionaries, resembled the struggle of the German patriot and Reformer against the rapacity and tyranny of sacerdotalism; but the upper classes of the nobility, led by the sanguinary Alva, raved of Luther as the incarnation of evil. Violent passions grew more violent by collision. The Spanish nobility made an attack on the booksellers' stalls which were supposed to contain writings of Luther or Hutten: the German populace took part with the insulted booksellers; and frequent scuffles and fights ensued. Again, some paintings posted in public, particularly over the lodging of the Elector of Saxony, occasioned grievous offence to the Romanists. The ark of God was represented as borne by Hutten and Luther: Erasmus appeared in front, and John Huss in rear of the ark, which was surmounted with two cups. And vari-

1521. ous caricatures of Aleander circulated amongst the populace.* Besides paintings and engravings, verses of Hutten and of Hermann Busch the Westphalian poet, who was then in Worms, parodies † and satires, in derision of the Nuncios, the Pope and Cardinals, and all that was Roman, contributed to stimulate Spanish bigotry and ferocity, as well as to kindle the passion and fire of German nationality. The threat resounded that the heretic should perish at the stake; and the answer reverberated, that, if so, the fire should be quenched in the blood of the Papists.

Before the dawn of the 18th April, the Privy Council of the Papist faction, Glapio, Aleander, Eck, and Cochlæus, had met in conclave, and were busied for some time in determining the course which it would be incumbent on them to pursue. On the other hand, the Reformer in his chamber was preparing for the decisive ordeal on his knees before God. He glanced over his writings; endeavoured to throw his answer into a proper shape; studied the Word of God in its most applicable passages; and again prayed fervently. Expostulating in the fervour of devotion, he said, "Almighty, Eternal God, how there is but one thing to be seen upon earth! How the people open wide their mouths! How small and slight is the trust of man in God! How is the flesh so tender and weak, and the devil so mighty and powerful through his apostles and worldly-wise ones! How does the world draw back the hand and hum, as it runs the common track, the broadway to hell, the portion of the godless! And it looks only and merely at what is commanding and power-

* Pallav. I. p. 39.

† See the German Litany, Walch. XV. p. 2175, of which the following may serve as a sample:—

From Annates, Good Lord deliver us.
From wrath, Good Lord deliver Aleander.

ful, strong and mighty, and bears a goodly mien. If I should 1521.
turn mine eyes thitherwards, it would be all over with me; my doom decided; and my sentence passed! O God! O God! My God, O thou my God! stand by me against all the world's reason and wisdom; Thou must do it; Thou alone; for it is not my cause but thine; I have nothing to do for mine own self; nothing to do with these great lords of the world; I would have good, peaceable days, and be free from tumult. But it is thy cause, Lord! the true eternal cause! Stand by me, thou true eternal God! I trust in no man. It is in vain and to no purpose all that is flesh, it is lame and halt, all that savours of flesh, O God! my God! Hearest thou not, my God! art thou dead? No. Thou canst not die. Thou only hidest thyself. Hast thou chosen me to this? I ask of thee that I may be assured thereof, if it be thy will; for all my life long I never thought to have to do with such great lords. I have not taken it upon myself, O God! Stand by me in the name of thy dear Son, Jesu Christ, who shall be my defence and shelter, yea, my fast tower through the might and the strength of thy Holy Ghost. Lord! where abidest thou? Thou, my God! where art thou? Come! come! I am ready to lay down my life patiently as a lamb. For the cause is right, and it is thine. I shall never be separated from thee! Be this determined in thy name! The world must leave my conscience unconstrained. And though it be full of devils, and my body, thy handiwork and creation, go to the ground, and be rent to fragments and dust, it is but the body; for thy word is sure to me; and my soul is thine, to thee it belongeth, and shall abide with thee to eternity. Amen. God help me. Amen." *

Rising from prayer, and placing his left hand on the volume

* Keil. p. 100.

1521. of Scripture open on the table before him, and raising his right hand to heaven, he swore never to forsake the truth of God, but, should it be God's will, to seal his testimony with his blood.

Four o'clock struck quickly amidst such wrestlings with Jehovah, and the herald presented himself with the grand marshal, as on the previous day, to conduct Luther to the Town Hall. When they arrived at the vestibule of the hall the Diet was in deep deliberation; and two hours intervened before Luther was admitted to their presence. Two hours of expectancy, adding to the severity of the trial! And it was thought that Aleander and his clique had calculated upon the influence of this delay and had purposely arranged it, that the uproar on all sides, the blending of confused sounds, and the harassing influence of suspense, might shake the equilibrium of the mind, and render it weak for the hour of trial that was to succeed. The hall was illuminated by torches, which, flashing on rich dresses and proud high-born features, made the scene more imposing, when Luther was ushered, as on the preceding audience, to his place in front of the throne. Charles was there as before, grave and thoughtful, the same Spanish dress, with the ostrich plume and the chain of pearls, from which hung the order of the Golden Fleece; but Luther gazed upon his sovereign with a calm fixed eye, an index of his inward tranquillity. There was no bewilderment of manner or look; no embarrassment, as on the previous day; the most common observer could predict that when the moment to answer should come, there would be no trembling in the voice.

The Chancellor of the Elector of Treves rose and said, first in Latin and then in German, "Martin Luther, although you had no right to demand a longer period for deliberation, inasmuch as you were well aware of the purpose for which you

were summoned, and a matter of faith ought to be so grounded in the minds of all, that any one, at whatever time he might be questioned, should be able to render a sure and settled reason for it; Come, then, and answer the imperial demand. Do you maintain all the books you have acknowledged to be yours? or are you willing to retract anything?" 1521.

In a suppliant and modest tone, without the least vehemence, but with the firmness of Christian courage,* Luther answered: "Most serene Emperor, most illustrious Princes, most gracious Lords, I appear before you obediently at the time appointed me yesterday evening, entreating, by the mercy of God, that your most serene Majesty, and your most illustrious Lordships, will deign to hear with clemency this cause, as I believe, of justice and truth. And, if through my ignorance, I should fail to give to any one his proper titles, or in any way whatsoever offend against the manners and habits of courts, that you will kindly pardon me, for I have lived not in courts, but cloisters, and can testify only this of myself, that, so far, I have taught and written with such simplicity of heart, as to regard only the glory of God, and the sincere edification of the faithful in Christ. Most serene Emperor, most illustrious Princes, to those two articles proposed to me yesterday by your most serene Majesty, viz., whether I recognised the books published in my name as mine? and whether I persevered in their defence, or was willing to retract them? I gave my ready and plain answer on the former article, in which I still persist, and shall persist, and shall for ever persist, viz., that they are my books, and were published in my name by myself, unless, perchance, by my rivals' cunning or dishonest wisdom, ought have been

* Quanquam suppliciter, non clamose ac modeste, non tamen sine Christianâ animositate et constantiâ.

1521. changed, or unfairly omitted; I acknowledge nothing but what is truly my own, written by myself alone, and have nothing to do with the construction which may be industriously attached to it.

"In replying to the other question, I entreat your most serene Majesty and your Lordships will deign to consider that my books are not all of the same kind. There are some in which I have handled the faith and piety of manners so simply and evangelically, that my adversaries themselves are compelled to confess them to be useful, harmless, and worthy of a Christian's perusal. Nay, the bull, fierce and cruel as it is, declares some of them harmless, although it condemns even these by a judgment which is truly monstrous. Should I then retract these, what should I do but, alone of all men, condemn that truth which my foes and friends alike acknowledge, struggling singly against the common consent.

"The second class of my writings inveighs against the Papacy, and the doctrine of the Papists, as persons who, by their foul doctrines and examples, have wasted Christendom with evils both spiritual and temporal. No one can deny this, nor pretend that it is not so. The experience of all, and of the whole world, is witness that, by the laws of the Pope and by the doctrines of men, the consciences of the faithful have been most miserably entangled, vexed, and tortured, their property and substance, especially in this renowned nation of Germany, by incredible tyranny, devoured, and, up to this very day, devoured without end and by shameful means; although, by their own laws, they provide that the laws and doctrines of the Pope, if contrary to the Gospel, or the sentiments of the Fathers, shall be accounted erroneous and reprobate.

"If then I recall these, what else shall I do but add strength to tyranny, and throw wide open not only the windows, but

the doors to gross impiety, which will stalk more widely and 1521.
freely than it has hitherto ever dared. By such revocation the reign of their iniquity will become most licentious and unabashed, utterly intolerable to the poor vulgar; it will be strengthened and established, especially if it be noised abroad that I acted by the authority of your most serene Majesty and the whole Roman Empire. O! good God! what a cloak I should be made to cover iniquity and tyranny!

"The third class of my writings is addressed to some private individuals, who laboured to defend the Roman tyranny and to overthrow the doctrine which I taught. I confess that I have been more bitter towards them than becomes my religion or profession. I do not rank myself as a saint; nor is the dispute about my life, but about the doctrine of Christ. But I cannot retract even these, because by such retractation tyranny and impiety would reign, and oppress the people of God more violently than even heretofore.

"I am but a man, and not God, and can uphold my books in no other way than that in which the Lord Jesus Christ himself maintained his doctrine. When he was questioned before the High Priest Annas, and buffeted, he said, 'If I have spoken evil bear witness to the evil.' If the Lord himself, who knew that he could not err, did not refuse to hear testimony against his own doctrine, even from the vilest slave, how much more ought I, who am but the scum of men, and can do nought but err, to require and expect what testimony may be rendered against my doctrine?

"I implore by the mercy of God that your most serene Majesty, and your most illustrious Lordships, and whosoever can, be he of the highest or lowest grade, will render testimony against it, convince me of my errors, and disprove them by the writings of the Prophets and Evangelists. I shall be

1521. most ready, if thus convinced, to retract every error, and will be the first to throw my writings to the flames.

"From this I think it clear that I have sufficiently weighed the dangers and hazards, the emulations and dissensions, of which my doctrine has been the occasion in the world, on which subject I was gravely and strongly admonished yesterday. It pleases me most of all to see the Word of God the occasion of emulations and dissensions; for such is the course of God's word, its consequence and issue, as he says, 'I came not to send peace, but a sword—I came to set a man against his father,' &c.

"Let us reflect, therefore, how our God is wonderful and terrible in counsel, lest if we begin by condemning the Word of God, which all this heat is aiming at, it prove the opening of an intolerable deluge of evils, and the reign of our youthful illustrious Emperor (in whom, next to God, our hope is placed) be clouded by an untoward and inauspicious commencement.

"I could adduce many instances from Scripture of monarchs, of Egypt, Babylon, and Israel, who never lost themselves so much as when, by their own wise counsels, they laboured to pacify and strengthen their realms. He it is who taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and overthroweth the mountains, and they know it not. To fear is the work of God. I do not say this because such noble potentates need my instruction or admonition, but because I am bound to pay the service which I owe to my beloved Germany. With these words I commend me to your most serene Majesty and your Lordships, humbly imploring that you will not suffer me, through the zeal of my enemies, to become odious to you without a cause. My speech is said."

Luther delivered this answer in German, and, when he had

finished it, he was quite overcome and exhusted with the 1521.
exertion. The Chancellor requested him to repeat what he had just stated in Latin. The Emperor was not partial to German, and understood it very imperfectly. Although Frederic von Thun, who stood at the Reformer's side at the Elector's command, as the Knight Chum had stood by John Huss at Constance, to ward off any sudden violence, observing his fatigue, intimated to him, "If you are exhausted, what you have said is enough;" after a few moments' respite, Luther recommenced, and went through the whole in Latin: the facility with which he did this gave the utmost satisfaction to the Elector of Saxony. The speech in German and Latin occupied two hours.

At the conclusion the Chancellor remarked, in a chiding tone, "You have not answered to the point. The doctrines condemned and defined by Councils cannot be brought into question. Give a simple and direct answer. Will you retract, or will you not?"

Luther, unmoved, replied, "Since your most serene Majesty and your Lordships require a simple and direct answer, I will give one as simple as language can express. Unless I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or plain reason—(for I do not believe in the Pope, nor in Councils alone, for it is certain they have often erred, and have contradicted themselves)—unless I am convicted by the texts which I have adduced (and my conscience is a captive to the Word of God), I cannot retract, nor will I retract anything, for to act against my conscience is neither safe nor honest. Here I stand: I can do no otherwise: God help me. Amen."

An indistinct murmur of applause, which even the imperial presence could not quite overawe and suppress, ran through the Hall at these words. And Charles himself half reversed his opinion of the previous day, and said, "The monk speaks

1521. boldly with confident courage." The Chancellor resumed—"If you do not retract, the Emperor and the States of the Empire will know how to deal with an irreclaimable heretic."

"God help me," Luther exclaimed emphatically, "for I can retract nothing."

The Reformer left the Hall, and the assembled potentates proceeded to deliberate. But the blow dealt that day to the power of Rome, seemed to the papal satellites fraught with such formidable consequences, that they resolved to make yet another attempt to avert it; and Luther was recalled. "Martin," it was said to him, "you have answered more boldly than beseems your character, and, moreover, not to the purpose. You make a division of your books without any bearing on your answer. Had you retracted those in which a large part of your errors is contained, without doubt his imperial Majesty, of his innate clemency, would not permit the destruction of those which are good. You revive doctrines which the Council of Constance has condemned, and you demand to be refuted by Scripture, which is thorough doating. To what purpose is a new disputation on matters condemned by the Church and a Council, unless peradventure a reason should be given on whatsoever subject to whosoever may require it. If he who impugns Councils and the sense of the Church must be convinced by Scripture, there will be no point in Christianity sure and determined. On this account his imperial Majesty demands of you a simple and a plain answer, in the negative or affirmative. Do you defend all your doctrines as Catholic? or, are you willing to retract any of them?"

Luther replied with gentleness and modesty—"My conscience is a captive to the Holy Scriptures. His imperial Majesty must not suffer me to be forced to retract without plain proofs on the part of my opponents. I have given a

simple and direct answer, and I have no other to give. The 1521.
decrees of Councils are not necessarily true: nay, Councils have erred, and have often contradicted one another. Hence the invalidity of my opponents' arguments. I can show that Councils have erred, and cannot revoke doctrines which are clearly and emphatically laid down in Scripture."*

The official merely replied, that "it could not be proved that Councils had erred." To which Luther answered, that "he certainly could prove it, and would undertake to do so." But it was now impossible to press that point any farther: the Reformer's language had been decided and unmistakeable: and he was dismissed by the Diet.

It quickly circulated through the city that Luther in the most positive terms had refused to revoke, and had been in consequence unequivocally condemned. And when he was observed to be conducted away from the Town Hall by the officers, in the dark of the evening, the rumour spread in all quarters that he was led away to be consigned to prison. Some noblemen shouted to him, "Whither are they taking you?" "To my hotel," Luther answered;† and thus the public anxiety was pacified, and a tumult which was on the point of breaking out prevented. Some of the Spanish nobility, however, and their dependants, who were wont to parade the streets proudly on their mules, and would never let an opportunity slip to show their national contempt for the Germans, vented their idle malice on the Reformer, by following on his track through the dim streets, with scoffs and mockings, like the howling of wild beasts.

On Luther's return full of joy to his hotel, Spalatin and his other friends joined him. Their feelings were in perfect

* Quod sedulo palam expressum sit in Scripturâ.
† Walch. XV. p. 2234.

1521. unison, and breathed fervent gratitude to God. "Had I a thousand lives," Luther said, "I would lay them all down rather than retract a word."* In the midst of general congratulations a servant entered bearing a silver can of Einbeck beer. Luther enquired who had sent him this token of his regard; and was informed that the aged Duke Eric of Brunswick, a partisan of Rome, who had drunk out of it himself first, had sent it him with the hope of affording him refreshment after his fatigue. Luther was parched with thirst, raised the can to his lips, took a long draught, and then putting it down, said, "As Duke Eric has remembered me this day, so may our Lord Christ remember him in his last struggle!"† And it is related, that as Duke Eric was dying he thought on Luther's words, and begged one of those by his bedside to read some portion of the New Testament to him; and the Saviour's promise was read, "Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward." This incident is important, as implying the remarkable impression which Luther's bearing before the Diet had produced, even on those who were strongly the antagonists of his religious sentiments.

The table was spread for supper in the apartment of the Elector of Saxony when Spalatin returned to his patron. They had fasted long; and the water had already been brought in for washing the hands; but Frederic could not satisfy the calls of appetite until he had beckoned his secretary‡ into his retiring-room, and given expression to his delight. "I am filled with joy: how nobly Luther spoke before

* Walch. XV. p. 2235.

† Keil. p. 102.

‡ Winckten sie mir in ihre kamer zu folgen. Walch. XV. p. 2247. Seckend. 1. p. 157.

the Diet! my only apprehension was lest he should say too 1521.
much." And he requested Spalatin to report what he had said to Luther. Bitterly did Aleander and his coterie blame their own shortsightedness in allowing the Reformer to speak at all, or at least in not interrupting the current of his remarks. His words had told too powerfully. Some, before steadfast in adherence to Rome, had been shaken in their constancy; others, who had wavered from side to side, had become decided in the conviction that the evangelical tenets were true: the Elector of Saxony, and the nobles who had before been friendly to the Reformation, had acquired fresh boldness and determination.

But Aleander and his conclave still built largely on the Catholic temper and constancy of the Emperor; and in the warmth of his hopes the Nuncio did not hesitate to speak of Charles V. as "the most sincere spirit that had been born into the world for a thousand years." Events proved that they might reckon with more certainty on his attachment to their cause on the motive of temporary expediency. The next day, Friday, a message relating to the proposed treat- April 19.
ment of Luther was written by the Emperor in French in his own hand, and was by his command read aloud the following day in the Diet. It was to this effect: "Our ancestors, Emperors of Germany, Kings of Spain, Archdukes of Austria, Dukes of Burgundy, were all obedient to the Roman See from the cradle to the last moment of their lives. Their ordinances they handed down for us to observe; and we must tread in the footsteps of our excellent fathers. Hence I am resolved to maintain the decrees of the holy Council of Constance and all the other Councils. And since one monk, deceived by self-opinion, wishes to raise his judgment above that of all Christendom, were his judgment true, it would be hard to believe that all Christendom has been so long in

1521. error: but as it is most false, and a diabolical invention, I will sacrifice my kingdoms, my empire, power, friends, body, blood, life, and soul, rather than that this sad beginning should proceed further; considering that such an issue would be to my great dishonour and disgrace, as well as that of the renowned nation of Germany, the vindicators of justice, protectors and defenders of the Catholic faith. And whereas we yesterday heard the obstinate reply which Luther made to us, I assure you by this my own writing, and certainly affirm, that it pains me in my heart to have delayed so long to proceed against the aforesaid Luther; and I recommend that he be reconducted home according to the tenor of the safe-conduct, with the understanding that the conditions named in it be strictly observed—that he shall not preach, write, nor be in any way the occasion of popular riot. And for what remains I am determined to proceed against him as against a manifest heretic, and demand that your resolutions be such as becomes good and faithful Christians, as you are and as you have promised."

This message gave deep umbrage to many members of the Diet; for Charles had failed to observe the established custom of asking first the opinion of the States, and had acted on his own arbitrary will. It occupied their attention the whole of the Saturday, and occasioned a very warm and passionate debate. The Elector of Brandenburg, as the mouthpiece of Aleander, and his own brother of Mentz, revived the doctrine that a promise is not to be kept to a heretic, and instanced as a precedent the execution of John Huss by the Council of Constance. This was the object at which the extreme Papists were now driving—the violation of the safe-conduct, and the destruction of Luther. But the Elector Palatine, who was very favourable to a reformation of the Church, rejected this counsel with disdain, and declared that neither victory nor

prosperity had blest Germany since that treacherous act of 1521.
burning Huss, but many calamities had befallen her in just retribution of perjury. Duke George of Saxony also characterised the perfidy recommended as "unbefitting the ancient good faith of the Germans." But there is no reason to suppose that, under the circumstances of the period, even if the Elector of Brandenburg's proposition had met with less strenuous resistance, it could ever have been carried into execution. Some noblemen assured Luther himself, that if a hand were laid on him for harm, there should be blood for blood. A scroll was found in the Emperor's bedchamber, nor could the least clue as to whose hand had put it there be discovered, with these words inscribed on it, "Woe to the land whose king is a child." And a placard appeared on the doors of the Town Hall threatening ruin to the Archbishop of Mentz, which four hundred knights had pledged their word to execute; and it was added that the writer would do "some great harm at the head of eight thousand foot soldiers. Bundschuh! Bundschuh! Bundschuh!" * The Archbishop was so much moved by this menacing notice that he swooned away on his seat. The Emperor merely remarked, with a smile, that he "doubted not the four hundred would prove like Mutius' three hundred, only one man." However, the popular resentment could not be aroused without the most imminent danger to all who should be concerned in any act of severity to Luther's person.

It was known that the castle of Ebernburg, at an easy distance, was crowded with the Reformer's staunch supporters, that every eye was turned to Worms, and that Hutten was amongst them, who had addressed letters of warning to the Emperor and the States, and had twice written in animating

* The gathering cry of the peasantry in the insurrections of 1501–2.

1521. and warlike terms to "the invincible theologian and evangelist Martin Luther, my saintly friend." "There is a great difference between your undertaking and mine," he wrote to Luther; "I rely on man's arm, you on God only." Many, he told the Reformer, came to him with the expression of their earnest hopes that Luther would remain steadfast. "Ah," he replied to them, "I see you want to be Luther."* To such a spirit, more Lutheran than Luther himself, to whom the struggle against Rome was the breath of his life, the inspirer of a large section of Germans who were not too loyally inclined to the Emperor, it was thoroughly understood by the Court that the most daring scheme would be the most acceptable. Indeed, Hutten was at this time negociating a league between the cities and the nobles, with a view to overthrowing the power of the ecclesiastical princes. He had Luther's works read at Sickengen's table; and had conceived some very ambitious designs for Sickengen himself, of whom he spoke as "the greatest soul of the age." His cry was for sword, bow, battle-axe, and cannon. And, further, the reports that reached Worms from distant parts of the empire proved that a finger laid on Luther would be the beginning of convulsions which would tear up order and government by the roots. These were powerful arguments, and precluded the idea of infringing the safe-conduct from being entertained for a moment by practical minds of the Romish party.

It was now the turn for moderate measures. The Archbishop of Mentz, admonished by his fears, and perhaps in some measure influenced by Wolfgang Capito, his chaplain, a Reformer at heart, but a cautious temporiser, waited on the Emperor, and prayed that time might be allowed to try the effect of renewed arguments and exhortations with Luther.

* Ihr wurdet ein Luther seyn.

Charles would not hear of farther delay. But afterwards the 1521.
princes in a body waited on the Emperor, and importuned him to grant the concession; and he yielded so far as to extend the safe-conduct for three days, during which time whoever would might treat with the Reformer privately. The princes assigned the office of mediator to the Archbishop of Treves, who, as a courteous man of the world, and an old and intimate friend of his brother Elector of Saxony, was every way well adapted for this part. The Archbishop despatched two priests of his household* to Luther, about supper time on Monday, to request a visit from him at six o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, the 24th April; for the intervening Tuesday was sacred to St. George, and the festival was to be kept with much pomp.

At four o'clock on the Wednesday morning Aleander sent for Cochlæus, and deputed him to watch the proceedings in the Papist interest, and note with strict accuracy the language used on either side, but on no account to enter into any argument with Luther. At the appointed hour the Reformer was at the Archbishop's hotel, and found the Archbishop himself, Margrave Joachim Elector of Brandenburg, Duke George of Saxony, the Bishops of Augsburg and Brandenburg, and the Master of the Teutonic Order, with Jerome Wehe Chancellor of Baden, who was to conduct the conference, assembled there. George Count of Wertheim, and Dr. Bock of Strasburg, and Peutinger of Augsburg, came into the apartment afterwards. Luther was himself attended by his friends, and by electoral councillors, whom Frederic, who was not over well pleased with this renewal of admonition and expostulation, had appointed to this duty.

Wehe opened the conference, by saying, that "the motive

* Cochlæus, p. 37.

1521. for their desiring an interview was not to dispute on doctrinal points, but in the spirit of Christian charity and gentleness to exhort Luther as a brother." He went on to observe, that Councils had passed different, but not contrary decrees. And even had they erred egregiously, that would be no reason why Luther should set up his own sentiments above them. Human laws were necessary: there must be order and an ecclesiastical system: and the tree must be judged, not by its blossom, but by its fruit. Martin, Nicolas, and many other saints, had taken a share in the deliberations of Councils. The Reformer's writings had kindled angry commotions, and especially his tract on Christian Liberty, which was abused to undermine the basis of ecclesiastical authority, and stimulate rebellion. And the devil took advantage of such abuse to bring those of his writings, the tendency of which was really good, into discredit, and thus debar them from any profitable influence. If the ecclesiastical ruler erred or sinned foully, his power and authority were not forfeited on that account. It was earnestly hoped that Luther would prove amenable to reason. And Wehe proceeded to enumerate thirteen distinct arguments why he should yield to the brotherly admonition addressed to him; "but if he persisted in the course he had chosen, the Emperor had no alternative but to adopt severe measures against him, and banish him from the Empire." So well did Dr. Wehe speak, Luther himself remarked in his relation of the interview, "as to let me know that the Chancellor of Treves was not worthy to pour water on his hands." *

At the close of the address, several of the Reformer's friends were pressing forward to furnish him with an answer to an objection, or to offer a suggestion; but Frederic von

* Walch. XV. p. 2294.

Thun repressed their eagerness, by saying, "Let him alone; 1521.
he is quite able to make answer for himself." Luther replied that he was grateful for the condescension and kindness of so great princes towards one so insignificant as he was. He had condemned the Council of Constance chiefly for denying the truth averred by Huss—"The Church of Christ is the universe of predestined souls"—and so denying by consequence this article of the Nicene Creed—"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." He quite agreed with what had been said on the obedience due to all in authority: but his objection was not that popes, cardinals, and bishops led godless and iniquitous lives; but that they taught false and unscriptural doctrine. The spirit of obedience and brotherly love was pushed too far, if it sanctioned the corruption of God's Word. And then raising his hands and enumerating in order upon his fingers Wehe's thirteen arguments, why he was bound to yield—"'Obedience to the magistrate'—Yes! I acknowledge obedience to be due to all in authority, although their lives be sinful and iniquitous;—'Obedience to the Church'—Yes! I am willing to accord it; I allow all; I will yield all: save only that which I dare not and cannot yield, because it is not mine to yield, but God's, the Scriptures, the Word of God. I will renounce all my own notions and opinions; I have stated as much again and again in my writings, but the Word of God, it is not mine to surrender."

Luther withdrew, and the Princes conferred together alone. After a short time he was recalled: and Wehe enquired, "Will you submit your writings to the judgment of the Emperor and the States?" He replied that he most willingly submitted his writings to the judgment not only of the Emperor, but of the very meanest of his subjects, provided only the judgment were formed according to the dictates of God's Word. He quoted St. Augustine on the sole infallibility of

1521. Holy Scripture, and cited St. Paul—"Though an angel from heaven should preach unto you another Gospel, let him be accursed." 'We must not then, it is evident," he continued, "believe an angel from heaven against God's own Word. I supplicate and implore that you will not urge my conscience, which is enchained to the truth of the divine Scriptures, to deny the clear declarations of God. I beg that I may be most humbly commended to his imperial Majesty, with the assurance that I will comply with any requirements of which my conscience does not disapprove." "Do you mean," asked the Margrave of Brandenburg, "that you will never yield unless you are convinced by Holy Scripture?" "Yes, that is my meaning, most gracious Lord," Luther answered, "unless I am convinced by Scripture, or by clear and indubitable reasoning."*

The meeting broke up after this explicit statement. But when the rest took their departure, John Eck, the Chancellor of Treves, and Cochlæus, stayed behind with the Archbishop, who requested Luther's attendance, with two of his friends, Amsdorf and Schurff, in a private apartment. Here Eck, taking up the thread of the previous conversation, endeavoured to argue the Reformer out of his dependence on Holy Scripture, by enumerating various heresies which had originated from that very source; and in particular laboured to impugn the position that the Catholic Church is the Communion of Saints. The Reformer and Schurff replied to the arguments advanced with great patience and moderation. "The Pope," Luther said, "is no judge in causes appertain-

* Audin, II. p. 111, adds—"Vous admettez donc une raison superieure à la parole de Dieu? Objecta vivement le chancelier: Luther resta silencieux." This addition is entirely Audin's invention; nor is it to be supposed that such a commonplace objection, had it been made, would have posed Luther for an instant.

ing to God's Word and faith; but each Christian must 1521.
examine and judge for himself, as he must live and die for himself. The master must follow the scholar, if the scholar is better read in God's Word." * Sometimes Cochlæus raised his voice in the discussion, and exhorted Luther to desist altogether from his undertaking, and cease to write and teach. But the private interview ended as the previous more public one had done. And it was reported to the Emperor, to his equal surprise and indignation, that the negociations had failed of their aim; but as, notwithstanding, hopes continued to be cherished in some quarters of an amicable settlement, he consented to extend the furlough to two days more.

Meanwhile Luther, at the hotel of the Knights of Rhodes, was an object of more general attention and curiosity than the Emperor and the princes and lords, not merely singly, but all united. One day Philip, the young Landgrave of Hesse,† rode into the courtyard of the hotel of the Knights of Rhodes, and, leaping from his horse, ran up the steps to Luther's apartment, requiring to speak with him. "My dear Doctor, how do matters go with you?" "My gracious Lord, with God's help all will go well," Luther replied. "They tell me," the Landgrave said, "that you teach that if a woman be married to an old man, it is allowable for her to quit him for a husband who is younger," and he laughed as he spoke. Luther also smiled at this calumny, and replied, "No! no! Your highness must not say so." Seizing the Reformer's hand, and giving it a warm shake, Philip exclaimed, "Well, Doctor, if your cause is just, may God aid you;" and rushing down stairs, and springing on his horse, rode out of the courtyard as abruptly as he had entered it. At another time

* Luther's own account to Count Albert of Mansfeld, Walch. XV. p. 2296.

† Walch. XV. p. 2247.

1521. Cochlæus walked into Luther's lodging after dinner time; and in the excitement of conversation, sometimes familiar and sometimes argumentative, made the Reformer the offer to dispute publicly with him, provided he would forego his safe-conduct. Jerome Schurff smiled, and observed, "That would be an equal contest, indeed!" Luther, however, was demurring, for a public disputation in Worms itself presented to his mind important advantages, when another friend, the knight Vollrat von Watzdorf, rudely seized the dean, and without more ado thrust him out of doors. On another occasion Luther was supping at the table of an ecclesiastical dignitary, probably the Archbishop of Treves. At such times he usually overflowed with mirth and wit; and the Chancellor John Eck, who had interrogated him in the Diet, drank to his health, and according to custom passed the glass to Luther. The Reformer having made the sign of the cross on the glass, was raising it to his lips, when it suddenly flew into a hundred fragments. "Either this wine was not intended for me, or it would have disagreed with me," Luther observed, laughing; "no doubt the glass has flown because in washing it was dipped too suddenly in cold water." But his friends with less charity whispered among themselves that he had providentially escaped being poisoned.* Such were some of the interludes between the various acts of the drama.

On the evening of Thursday, the 25th April, the negociations were resumed, and Chancellor Wehe, in company with Dr. Peutinger, by the request of the Archbishop of Treves visited the Reformer at his hotel. The Elector of Saxony had been apprised of this intended visit, and sent Frederic von Thun and Dr. Philipp to be at the Reformer's side during the

* From a manuscript history, preserved in the library of Gotha, of Razeberg, physician to the Elector John Frederic. D'Aubigné, II. p. 326. Audin, II. p. 133. Kiel, p. 105.

interview, and use every precaution to prevent his being drawn 1521.
into any snare. The bent of their solicitations was that Luther should resign the settlement of the case simply and absolutely into the hands of the Emperor and the States, in reliance on their Christian and friendly intentions. Luther replied that he acknowledged the power and authority of the Emperor, but he could never resign the Word of God. He found it written there, "Put not your trust in princes;" and "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man." But on the Archbishop's delegates persisting in their efforts to persuade him to commit his cause to the arbitrament of the civil power, he frankly declared, "Rather than leave my cause to the Emperor, I would renounce my safe-conduct." Frederic von Thun upon this rose hastily from his seat and exclaimed, "That is enough; you have your answer; he can never renounce the safe-conduct;" and immediately quitted the apartment. Doctor Philipp remained whilst they pressed their arguments a little farther, Luther firmly maintaining that "he could never let the Word of God go from his hands. What must become of him if he did?" They then left him for the present, stating that they would call again in the afternoon, and meanwhile they hoped he would ponder favourably on what they had said.

In the afternoon they returned with a new proposal, to the effect that Luther should submit his opinions, or some propositions extracted from his writings, to the decision of a General Council. He replied that he was quite willing to give his assent to this proposal, on condition that the judgment to be passed by the Council should be in conformity to Holy Scripture. And the negociators hastened back to the Archbishop with the welcome assurance that Luther had given his consent to the determination of the questions in dispute by a General Council. The Archbishop immediately sent for Luther, and

1521. greeting him very kindly, said, "My dear Doctor, I understand that you agree to submit your cause to the judgment of a Council." "My gracious lord," Luther answered, "I can endure anything saving to surrender Holy Scripture." "Did you then make a reservation of the Scriptures?" the Archbishop exclaimed, who had before suspected there must be some mistake. "My Doctors told me that you had given an unconditional assent: and I am glad that I had not carried their report to the Emperor before speaking personally with you." The good Archbishop then led the Reformer into a private room, Spalatin, it would appear, being the only witness of the interview, and essayed his own powers of persuasion with Dr. Martin. Luther honestly avowed that he could feel little confidence in submitting his opinions to the verdict of the Emperor and the States, after their summoning him to their bar and then condemning him before he had answered to the summons, by sentencing his books to be carried to the magistrates to be burnt. After some conversation, which left the matter in as unsatisfactory a state as before, the Archbishop enquired, "Is there any remedy, Doctor, that you can yourself suggest to stay these unhappy dissensions?" "I know not of any," Luther replied, "except the advice of Gamaliel, 'If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.' Let the Emperor and the States write to the Pope that they are fully assured, that, if the doctrines so much decried are not of God, they will perish by a natural death within two or three years." The Archbishop enquired whether he had any objection to some of the propositions taken from his writings, which had excited the most stir in men's minds, being submitted to a Council. "None whatever," Luther replied, "provided they be not those which the Council of Constance condemned; for I am firmly convinced in my soul that they are scriptural."

"I fear," said the Elector, "they are the very same." "By 1521.
those decrees, my gracious lord," Luther continued, "the Word of God itself was condemned; and I had rather lose my life and head than ever abandon the simple and plain Scriptures." The Archbishop now saw clearly that nothing could be done.

The conduct of Luther at Worms has been arraigned with severity by two very opposite classes, by bitter Papists, and by some of the more extreme partisans of the Reformation; and, strangely enough, by both on very nearly the same ground.* According to these authorities, his look ought to have been stouter, his words should have been in bolder and sharper defiance of his enemies; and, in particular, he ought not, on his first appearance before the Diet, to have requested space for deliberation; but without any delay, which always implies indecision, he ought to have avowed his settled refusal to retract a word or a letter of his writings. Luther himself makes nearly the same complaint, when he writes to Spalatin, that "he is grievously vexed in conscience that he yielded to his advice, and that of his other friends, and tamed his spirit, and did not act with more of the power of Elias in presence of those idols." But, in his old age, when he delighted in reviewing past eventful scenes, he delivered a different judgment: "God himself inspired me with courage at that time: I had no fears, and was quite ready to lay down my life: I doubt whether I could be so fearless now." And this more mature verdict is undoubtedly the true one. There was Luther at Worms without that admixture of baser qualities which too often sullied his noble acts and glorious words; all his firmness without his sarcasm, abusiveness, and violence.

* See, for instance, on one side Audin, and on the other Vaughan, in the remarks prefixed to his translation of the "Bondage of the Will."

1521. There can be no doubt but his demanding a day for further deliberation added much to the influence of his final answer: it showed that what he did was done not precipitately, but on due and careful reflection, with a full view of consequences; and he was far too clear-sighted not to have anticipated, at the very moment of making the demand, the additional weight that would thus be given to his words. That he never for an instant dreamt of a revocation, even in a syllable, his familiar correspondence affords uncontrovertible proofs. Nor is his conduct the less commendable, because, on the pedestal on which some of his warm admirers would fain have had him raise a statue or a monument to himself, he placed, not himself or any of his own opinions or writings, but the Word of God. With less humility and forbearance he might have been guilty of despising "the powers that be," and by such weakness must have done grievous damage to his cause: but he was invincible by always appealing to Scripture as the only standard of truth, and reiterating that he himself and his notions were nothing, God and his Word were everything.

On quitting the hotel of the Archbishop of Treves, Luther paid a visit to the sick chamber of John Minkwitz, a knight and councillor of the Elector of Saxony, whose illness seemed likely to terminate in death. After suitable discourse and prayer, Luther pronounced a benediction on the sick man, observing that "he should not be able to visit him again, for he should leave Worms to-morrow." Spalatin was in the room, and pulling Luther's cowl to make him turn round his head, said: "Doctor, how do you know that? you have no intimation to that effect?" "You will see," Luther answered, "that I shall leave Worms to-morrow."* His friends returned with him to the hotel of the knights of Rhodes, and

* Walch. XV. p. 2248.

shortly afterwards, about three hours from his quitting the 1521.
Archbishop's hotel, the Chancellor of Treves, with Maximilian Transilvanus, Secretary to the Emperor, and some other officials, presented himself before the Reformer, and read aloud the Imperial command. "Martin Luther, since you have in such various ways been admonished by the Emperor, the Electors, Princes, and States of the Empire, but all in vain, to return to your proper mind and to the unity of the Church, it only remains for his Majesty to resort to such measures as become an advocate of the Catholic faith. It is therefore the imperial command, that within twenty-one days you return whence you came, under the public safe-conduct, and that you excite no popular disturbance on the road by preaching or writing." On hearing this command, Luther bowed his head, and answered, "Be it so! as the Lord will! Blessed be the name of the Lord!"* He then desired the expression of his warmest thanks, most humbly and truly, to the Emperor, the Princes and the States of the Empire, for the gracious hearing they had vouchsafed him, and their gracious observance of the safe-conduct. "I have never required anything," he added, "but a reformation of the Church in accordance with Holy Scripture. In other respects I would undergo anything for the sake of his Imperial Majesty and the States of the Empire, life, death, fame, infamy, gain, loss.† But the Word of God must not be bound. It must be left free to me to confess and to proclaim it, without any reservation. I most humbly commend me, and declare my submission to his Imperial Majesty and the States of the Empire." The same evening, the Councillors of the Elector of Saxony

* See Mathesius, p. 48.

† Luther repeats this in his letter to Charles. Walch. XV. p. 2251.

1521. concerted the means of providing for Luther's safety under the perils that were ready to burst on his head: and their plan was communicated to the Reformer, who, on the understanding that Frederic desired his compliance, acquiesced very reluctantly in it. The Elector himself, for obvious reasons, wished that the whole management of the scheme should devolve on his councillors, and that everything should be concealed from himself except the mere outline of the plan.

April 26. On Friday morning, the Reformer's friends breakfasted with him at his hotel, a parting meeting full of joy from the unanimous sense of the glorious witness which he had been enabled to bear to the truth; and at ten o'clock he bade them an affectionate farewell, and departed from Worms, accompanied by the same noblemen on horseback who had formed his escort when he entered the city. Remnants of the crowds of populace who had remained true in their devotion to Luther from his entrance into Worms to his exit, might be still seen lingering in knots here and there in the streets after the cavalcade had passed the city gate. The imperial herald a few hours later rode after the party, and joined Luther at Oppenheim, where they rested for the night.

The next day they proceeded to Frankfort, where Luther was lodged in the house of Wolfgang Prenter, who had cordially welcomed and entertained him before when going to his trial. Hence the Sunday morning following, he wrote a characteristic epistle to his Wittenberg friend, Luke Cranach, the painter, his coadjutor in caricatures. "My service, dear gossip Luke. I bless and commend you to God; and for myself have given consent to their concealing me, but as yet I know not where. And though I had far rather have suffered death at the hands of the tyrants, especially the raving Duke George of Saxony, yet the counsel of good people it is

not meet to despise.* . . . . I supposed that his Impe- 1521.
rial Majesty would have assembled some fifteen doctors or so, and have overcome the monk by argument; but no, nothing of the sort. Are the books yours? Yes. Will you revoke or not? No. Get you gone, then. O! blind Germans, what children we are, to let the Roman apes scoff at and befool us in this way! Give my gossip, your dear wife, my greeting; and I trust she will keep well till I have the pleasure of seeing her again. The Jews must be allowed to sing for once, Yo! Yo! Yo! But our Easter week will come soon, when we shall sing Hallelujah. For a short time we must be silent and endure. 'A little time and ye shall not see me—and again a little time and ye shall see me.' I hope it will prove so with us. But God's will as always of all the best be done herein, as in heaven so on earth. Amen."

They prosecuted their route on the Sunday to Friedburg, April 28.
and reposed there that night. In the evening of the Lord's day Luther sat down to frame two letters, one to the Emperor and the other to the States, both written with the same object, and often in nearly the same terms; and which quickly passed into print, and served, as Luther intended they should, as the expositors of his feelings and principles, through the length and breadth of Germany. They recapitulated what had transpired at Worms, declared the most heartfelt loyalty to the Emperor and the States, and in this reverence to earthly potentates made no exception, save of "the holy, free, plain, and clear Word of God, the Lord of all, and hereafter the Judge of all." Luther closed his epistle to the States by saying, "If Christ my Lord and my God, prayed on the

* It is singular that, with this letter before him, Michelet should say, "Luther avait renvoyé le héraut, qui l'escortait à quelques lieues de Worms, et ses ennemis en ont conclu qu'il s'attendait à son enlèvement. Le contraire ressort de sa correspondence."—Memoires, I p. 90.

1521. cross for his enemies, how much more am I bound to pray, implore, and entreat with all submission and faith for his Imperial Majesty, the whole empire, my dearest lords, the rulers and magistrates, and the whole German people, whom in all obedience I commend to the grace and favour of Almighty God." Such words were his solemn farewell to the Diet. He gave these letters to Caspar Sturm to convey to Worms, and deliver to those to whom they were addressed: and he warmly embraced the herald on parting.

The next day he travelled to Grunberg, a town in the dominions of Philip of Hesse, from whom, in contemplation of this route, he had obtained a safe-conduct,* the style of which betrayed not darkly the Lutheran tendency of the
April 30. Landgrave: and here he spent the night. On Tuesday, he proceeded to Hirschfeld, the Prince Abbot of which, Crato Milius, a monk of the Benedictine Order, sent his chancellor and treasurer to meet him at the distance of a mile from the city, whilst he himself, with a considerable retinue of horsemen, waited somewhat nearer the town, and conducted him to his palace, the Senate welcoming him at the gate.† That evening Luther was sumptuously entertained by the Abbot: it was insisted that he should occupy for the night the Abbot's own bed: and the next morning at five o'clock, in compliance with entreaties which would not admit of refusal, although he candidly stated the imperial prohibition, and the danger involved in disregarding it, he preached to the Abbot and his
May 1. court in the Church. The evening of the same day (Wednesday) he prosecuted his journey as far as Eisenach, whence he wrote a hurried account to Count Albert of Mansfeld of what had passed at Worms; and here too he again ascended the pulpit, and preached those truths, for proclaiming which he

* See it in Walch. XV. p. 2126. † De Wette, II. p. 6.

had already been excommunicated, and was shortly to be out- 1521.
lawed. The curate, with a notary and two witnesses at his side, stood trembling at the door of the church, and interposed his protest; but merely with the object of screening himself from the consequences of acquiescing in an illegal act. On leaving Eisenach Luther turned aside from the high road, and directed his course towards the little village of Mora, where his uncle Henry Luther dwelt, with whom his aged grandmother resided; and many other relatives lived in the neighbourhood. At this point, therefore, he parted from his comrades, Schurff, Jonas, and Suaven, who continued their journey to Wittenberg by the direct road through Gotha and Erfurth; and he struck into the forest of Thuringen, and, in company with Amsdorf alone, arrived at Mora the same evening. The whole of the Friday was passed in this secluded and tranquil scene, a delightful contrast to the turmoil of Worms, and the renewed artifices of his opponents. And on Saturday he started again on his journey, in com- May 4.
pany with Amsdorf and his brother James, in the direction of Walterhausen.

They had not travelled far when, just as the waggon was passing a narrow defile near the ruined church of Glisbach, not far from the castle of Altenstein, the fortress of the knight Burckard von Hund, two armed horsemen, their faces concealed under masks, with three armed attendants also masked, suddenly made their appearance, and fell on the band of travellers. Immediately James Luther sprung out of the waggon, and, without a word of farewell to his brother Martin, fled with precipitancy towards Walterhausen. The waggoner was thrown to the ground and beaten; Amsdorf was seized and held fast; whilst Luther himself was secured and hurried away to a spot where a horse, ready bridled and saddled, had been tied, which he was made to mount, and

1521. a knight's mantle thrown around him, and a knight's cap drawn over his brows. The object of the intrusion thus attained, the waggoner and Amsdorf were left without further molestation to pursue their way through the forest. The whole was the deed of a few moments, in executing which the horsemen observed a profound silence: and Luther having been mounted, they rode away, changing their course many times, as if with a view to baffle pursuit. One of them dropt his cap, but would not stay to pick it up. In this way they wore out the evening and the twilight, and so exhausted Luther, who was unused to riding, and had been weakened by his recent trials, that they were obliged to halt from their wanderings for some time, and suffer the Reformer to dismount, and rest on the ground under a beech tree near a fountain which still bears his name, with the waters of which he slaked his thirst. It was drawing on for eleven o'clock at night, when the party arrived at the foot of a very steep and almost precipitous hill. On its summit, frowning over the forest, whose umbrageous solitudes mantled their dark shelter round, and looking beyond to a range of hills which, opening at intervals, suffered the eye to escape with delight over "that golden land,"* the fertile and well-cultivated valleys of Thuringia, stood the venerable fortress of the Wartburg, or the Castle of the Watch-tower, sacred to St. Elizabeth, and once the seat of the Landgraves of Thuringia. Here one of the party was bound to represent a prisoner captured in the day's enterprise; and thus the knights passed the portal, and, having aided Luther to dismount, led the way into the interior of the fortress. One of the knights proved to be Burckard von Hund, the Lord of Altenstein, and the other John von Berlepsch, the Provost of the Wartburg. Luther was conducted by the

* So the Count of Mansfeld called it.

latter, with all the respect that could be shown the most dis- 1521.
tinguished guest, to an apartment which was found already prepared as for an expected visitor. He was provided with the attire and sword of a knight; he was requested to suffer his hair and beard to grow; and, to complete the incognito, he was to be known to the household by the title of Yonker George.

Thus the scene is curiously and abruptly shifted from the Town Hall of Worms to the upper room in the solitary Wartburg; and a new chapter opens in the story of Luther's life. There was much in the change to vex and irritate, but something also to refresh his heart. "I had rather," he affirmed, "have been laid on a bed of burning coals, than be compelled to endure the weariness of such a captivity!" Wittenberg and his duties, his preaching and lecturing, his friends and intimates, the open honesty and hardihood of his life all resigned! The sacrifice was not a light one. But, as he gazed round his apartment, looked over the battlements of his tower of refuge, surveyed his own figure in the mirror, he found subjects of congratulation. "Here I am," he exclaimed, "in a condition of true Christian liberty, disenthralled from all the enactments of the Roman tyrant!"

Luther had not been conveyed many days to a place of safety before the edict of the Diet was fulminated against him, and all who in any way shared his opinions. But this measure was intimately connected with political designs and alliances, of which it is essential to speak.

Leo X., votary of the arts, and of sensuality, as he was, was not devoid of the ambition of acquiring glory; to which he was stimulated by a jealous eagerness to rival the warlike fame of his predecessor, Julius II., and in particular, by a desire to recover Parma and Placentia, which, to his great discredit, he had lost. Well aware of the hostile feelings entertained by Francis towards a political rival who had carried off

1521. the prize at which he had aimed, his first overtures had been made to the French monarch. But Charles had an able representative at the Papal court in Don John Manuel, the staunch friend of his father Philip, and a sufferer in his behalf. But even of more moment at such a juncture than the skill of his ambassador, was the bait which Charles was able to hold out to secure the Pontiff's favour. Although Leo and his cardinals valued the doctrines of their Church chiefly as furnishing an inexhaustible subject for jest, yet it was impossible that they could view with any sentiment, save that of the keenest animosity, the spread of opinions which struck at the foundation of their political and social condition: and none could better appreciate the force of Luther's words, that he had "bitten a good hole in the pocket of the Papists." And accordingly on Maundy Thursday, the anniversary of the institution of the Lord's Supper, when the Redeemer of the world, taking the cup in his hand, pronounced—"This is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins," and which the Roman Church selects as the day on which to pronounce her bitter and horrible imprecations on all who oppose or deny her claims by her bull, "In Cœnâ Domini," the name of Luther, as the latest and worst of heretics, was added to the list of those annually consigned by infallible authority to misery in this world and the next. Well aware, therefore, what sat uppermost in the mind of the Roman Curia for the time, Don John Manuel made an efficient use of the Emperor's position in regard to the great Reformer. And at length it was understood that severity against Luther and his adherents would be accepted by the Papal See as the purchase of its assistance in political enterprise. The revocation of the papal briefs in regard to the Inquisition in Spain, as already alluded to, was the first fruits of this understood compact. And by virtue of it a treaty was further concluded between the Pope and the Em-

peror on the 8th of May, which stipulated that by their united 1521.
forces the French should be expelled from the Milanese, and May 8.
the Duchy given to Francis Sforza: that Parma and Placentia should be restored to the Church; that the Emperor should aid the Pope to conquer Ferrara; that the annual tribute paid by Naples to the Holy See should be augmented; that the Medici should be taken under the special protection of the Emperor; that ten thousand ducats a year should be settled on the Cardinal, and lands in the kingdom of Naples to an equal annual value should be bestowed on Lorenzo's illegitimate son Alexander.

But although the Emperor was thus committed to Luther's condemnation, an obstacle to fulfilling his intentions existed in the warm sympathy, which, ever since his appearance before them, the States had shown with Luther's cause and personal history. It was therefore necessary to tide over the arrangement of the business, till the opportunity should be ripe. And the delay was not long. The Elector of Saxony, who observed "that not only Annas and Caiaphas, but Pilate also and Herod, were adversaries to Christ," was too much disgusted by what transpired of the understanding between the Nuncios and the Emperor to remain much longer in Worms, particularly as his state of health was so feeble that he was scarcely able to walk from room to room without the support of attendants. His departure was followed by that of the Elector Palatine and the Archbishop of Cologne, the other two Electors who were favourably inclined to Luther. And, following the example of the Electors, the princes and nobles of similar bias retired one after another from the theatre of discussion, and left the Diet at the mercy of the Spaniards in the Emperor's retinue—the Nuncios of his Holiness, and the papistical section of the German princes headed by the Emperor himself. As the ban

1521. of the Diet had already been declared against Luther conditionally, unless he retracted,* it was only requisite that an edict should be drawn up on the basis of this previous resolution. And it was deputed to Aleander to compose a rough draught of what might serve as the edict; and he gratified to the full his virulent and vindictive feelings in the style of the
May 25. composition. On the 25th May, when the Princes had escorted back the Emperor from the Town Hall to the Bishop's Palace, in which he was residing, the draught of the edict was by imperial command suddenly and unexpectedly produced and read aloud to those present; and the Elector of Brandenburg, speaking for the rest, acknowledged his consent to it. The next day, just as mass was about to be solemnized in the Cathedral of Worms, Aleander, robed in the full insignia of his commission, approached the Emperor, and, kneeling at his feet with the edict in Latin in one hand, and a copy of it in German in the other, humbly prayed his Imperial Majesty to affix his signature and seal. The Emperor graciously smiled, and complied with the petition.

The edict stated that it is the duty of the true Emperor of the Romans not only to extend the limits of the sacred Empire by the conversion of infidels to orthodoxy; but likewise to see that among the subject nations no spot of heresy defile the pure vesture of religion. That Martin Luther, an Augustine friar, had been condemned by the Church as guilty of monstrous heresy. That on extreme unction this grievous heretic thought with Wycliffe; that on purgatory, the mass, and indulgences he held the same opinion as the Waldenses and Wycliffe, contrary to the doctrine of the Church; that as to the Church itself he spoke as did the Pelagians and Hussites; that he termed the Council of Constance "Satan's

* See the Resolution, Walch. XV. p. 2057.

synagogue;" and that everywhere he excited the people to revolt, schism, murder, and every outrage. "But in fine," it continued, "this Luther is no man, but the devil himself in human form under a monk's cowl, for the perdition of mankind." That under the pretence of faith he was labouring to destroy true faith; under pretence of liberty he was trying to introduce the servitude of Satan's yoke; under the profession of the Gospel he sought to extirpate the peace and charity of the Gospel, to invert all order, and mar the beauteous harmony of the Church. That he spurned at the authority of the Pope, the Church, and Œcumenical Councils. And therefore that after the expiration of twenty-one days, wherever he might be found, proceedings should be taken against him; and whoever gave him meat or drink or any sort of aid by act, word, writing, or in whatever way, should suffer confiscation of all his goods, moveable and immoveable. That none should buy or sell, retain, read, copy, act, print, or cause to be printed or copied, preach, assert, or in any way maintain or defend his writings or doctrines. And the same was enacted in reference to every schedule, libel, picture, invective, satire, abuse, against the Pontiff, the Apostolic See, prelates, princes, or universities. And no one was to print, engrave, or publish anything relating, in however slight a degree, to sacred letters or the Catholic faith, without the licence of the ordinary of the place or his deputy, together with the sanction of the theological faculty of some neighbouring university. This edict bore date the 8th of May, but in reality it received the imperial signature, as has been already stated, on the 26th of May, and was ante-dated that it might seem to have been issued with the consent of the whole Diet in full assembly. 1521.

But before the bolt fell the Reformer was securely lodged in his mysterious retreat. Alcander's malice had a mo-

1521. mentary gratification; the Popish faction enjoyed a shortlived triumph; but events ere long proved the edict to be little less futile than the bull had been. It has even been hinted by historians that the Emperor himself, although he signed the decree, was accessory to the plot by which Luther was exempted from the fate his enemies had prepared for him; there can be little doubt that he was secretly pleased at his escape from the pontifical vengeance; and it is certain that he never adopted any means to discover his concealment in order to apprehend his person. The Germans had concluded far too rashly that their young emperor was a person of very ordinary or even mean capacity, at least that he was by no means to be compared with his brother Ferdinand. But in reality the silence and gravity which wore the semblance of weakness and indecision, veiled powers for political intrigue and combination of the very highest order. The death of his prime minister, which occurred during the session of the Diet, left Charles more to his own counsels, but was not needed to develope faculties derived from nature rather than from education, and already in active exercise. It is very evident, on impartial examination, that in all Charles's seeming variations there was a real unity; he appeared to be driven, yet he in fact was steering his course straight for a haven he had deliberately marked out; and by dexterously leaning first to one side, and then the other, he contrived to attain his own end while seeming to bend to the will of others. He had secured the alliance of the Pope by a harshly-worded, but, as events showed, an innocuous edict; on the other hand, he had not violated the safe-conduct granted to Martin Luther, and never dreamt of molesting him in his place of refuge. For however much it might now serve his turn to humour the ultramontane faction, Charles was far too sagacious and long-sighted to overlook the contingency, that if the great heretic's

life were preserved, he might, at some future day, be again 1521.
as good a card in his hand in his deep game for political ascendancy as he had proved already. And thus he quitted Worms as successful in his diplomacy as he had before quitted the shores of England.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE END OF MAY, 1521, TO THE SPRING OF 1523.

1521. The bull, which had been intended to crush for ever the reformed opinions and their author, decided the success of the one, and the popularity of the other; the edict of Worms, the imperial sanction of the bull, was certainly only less powerful than the bull itself in strengthening the cause it aimed at destroying: and Luther's removal from the theatre of active life to the seclusion and refuge of the Wartburg, was, further, a most effective instrument in spreading his tenets, and rendering his person almost an object of national adoration. The Papists hoped that the ink with which the edict was signed would scarcely dry up ere Lutheranism would be extinguished by such a bitter document. It was generally published; and many of the Bishops, in their zeal for the Papacy, charged their clergy to refuse absolution to every Lutheran; and in some places the Reformer's writings were publicly committed to the flames. The Emperor himself passed one of these bonfires at Antwerp, but with a hardly-suppressed smile. All this lasted for some time. But as soon as the Emperor took his departure to draw together the threads of his diplomacy, and execute his warlike schemes, the tone of popular feeling became more and more audible and decided, and the German princes, who had either been entrapped into giving their sanction to the edict, or had previously quitted the Diet in disgust, were willing enough to respect the will of their subjects, and let the offensive proscription be a dead letter. On the

other hand, the Papist Princes, with the exception of such 1521.
men as the Elector of Brandenburg, and Duke George of Saxony, were deprived of the presence of their Emperor, and of their own courage in the cause of religion, nearly at the same time. And the Archbishop of Mentz, whose destruction was reported to have been vowed by a conspiracy numbering 1800 members,* went so far in his endeavours to allay the public indignation, as to prohibit the Minorites, who had made their churches ring with their invectives, from preaching against Luther any further.

What had become of the Reformer was the topic in every mouth; and a great diversity of rumours obtained circulation. Some asserted that he had been waylaid and assassinated by emissaries of the Pope; others declared that he had been conveyed, out of regard for his safety, by friends, beyond the German frontier, and France was supposed to be the scene of his exile. At length an account of his seizure by armed horsemen, who had carried him off with his hands tied behind him, was one step attained towards the solution of the question by the prevailing curiosity; but the object of this captivity, and the place of his imprisonment or concealment, remained an uncertainty, about which various conjectures were hazarded. The universal interest which these enquiries excited was anything rather than gratifying to the votaries of Rome; and Aleander deridingly exclaimed, "We shall have to light a candle, and search through the land for this monk to give him back to his Germans!" When more certain tidings of his safety reached Wittenberg the joy was intense. "Our dearest father," Melancthon wrote to Link, "is still living. O! happy day, when I shall embrace him once more!"

* "Fertur galerita Moguntinus hostes in se juratos habere 1800." —De Wette, II. p. 11.

1521. Meanwhile Luther in his watch-tower was a prey to bitter self-recrimination, both on account, as he now viewed it, of his "timid conduct" at Worms, and also of his acceding to the Elector's wish in receding for a time from his office of preaching and teaching. He accused himself of having treated the Emperor with too much respect, and of having failed to bear witness to Jehovah before Ahab and his guilty court, with more determined energy; and he sought in vain for a proof sufficient to satisfy his conscience that the God who had commissioned him to declare his word had called him to the safe retreat of his present asylum. As he sat alone in this meditative mood the vision of the distressed condition of the Church rose before his eyes. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "that I was not worthy to suffer death from the Rehoboam of Dresden, and the Benhadad of Damascus! * 'Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people,' the spiritually slain of Satan and the Pope. Would that the hog of Dresden had put me to death in the discharge of my true functions, whilst publicly preaching the Gospel! But if it be not the Lord's will and my privilege to suffer for His sake, His will be done!" No letter was despatched by him from his retreat until the 12th May, and then he wrote to Melancthon, Amsdorf, and Agricola. It was the first day that he had received tidings of the Electoral court in a letter from Spalatin; and previously, as he said, he had been apprehensive that any letters he might send would be intercepted. "Pray for me," he wrote to Philip, "that this seclusion may work out something for God's glory. You acknowledge your own calling and gifts. Be earnest as a minister of the Word; set up the walls and towers of Jerusalem, until they seek your

* Duke George of Saxony and the Elector of Brandenburg.

life also." "The Lord visits me," he wrote to Amsdorf, 1521.
"pray for *me*, for I never forget you. Be bold and preach the Word with confidence. A cruel edict has been issued against us; but the Lord will laugh them to scorn." "I sit here," he wrote to Agricola, "of my own will, and yet against my will: of my own will because it seems God's will, and against it because it is my heart's desire to stand up in public for his Word. Your office is to instruct your scholars in the Word; be zealous to fulfil this ministry." Agricola's wife had just given him a little daughter; Luther had engaged to be godfather, and he appends a postscript to his letter—"I send two gold pieces, one for your little daughter, the other for the mother to buy wine with, to increase her supply of milk." *

In a letter to Spalatin two days subsequently, describing his journey from Worms, and his capture, he writes of himself—"I sit idle, and full of meat and drink the whole day; I read the Bible in Greek and Hebrew; I am writing a sermon in German on the liberty of auricular confession; I shall proceed with my comments on the Psalms, and with the Postils, as soon as ever I have received what I want from Wittenberg with the Magnificat which I had begun." A letter addressed to Melancthon the 26th May, exhibits him again immersed in his studies and writings, and gratified with the rumours which reached him from the neighbouring town of Eisenach, and from all sides, of the progress of the evangelical cause. "I am replying to James Latomus: I send an exposition, which I have completed at my leisure, of the 68th Psalm: I intend to give the expositions of the Gospels and Epistles in German. . . . . If the Pope assails all who think with me, Germany will be involved in tumult: God is moving the spirits of many, and the hearts of the people; the public

* De Wette, II. pp. 1—4.

1521. conviction cannot be repressed, and if that be attempted, it will only add tenfold force to the general impulse." Luther had heard with great pleasure of the marriage of a priest, his friend Bernard of Feldkirchen, pastor of Kemberg, and observed that he was "a husband strangely without fear in such troublesome times: the Lord direct him and mix delights with his lettuces, which will be the case without my prayers; I fear he will be driven from his cure, and then another stomach will want besides his own, as well as the stomachs that may proceed from them. But if he has faith, God, who suffers not the fowl to starve, will provide for him."

The walls of the Wartburg often at this time rang with Luther's laughter, as he perused some of the satirical pieces against Popery, in the form of dialogue or otherwise, which had been forwarded to his retreat. "Wood from the burning of Luther's Books," the work of Francis Faber; "The Dialogue between the He-goat and the Spectre," and other writings against Emser; Hutten's "Address to the Hats and long-winged Hoopoes of Worms, *i.e.* the Cardinals and Bishops," afforded him especial amusement: and he examined with delight the "Christ and Antichrist" of Luke Cranach, a series of antithetical engravings contrasting the meekness, humility, and sufferings of the Saviour, with the pomp, luxury, and iniquities of his pretended Vicar; to which Luther himself had added explanatory verses.

Melancthon's "Common Places," the lasting value of which he had anticipated, had not been sent him, and he was very anxious to see what had as yet been printed of this celebrated work. "*You* will succeed to me," he wrote to Philip, "as Elisha to Elias, with a double portion of my spirit. If I perish, the Gospel will not perish with me. It was not with my own will that I became a preacher of the Word. How can you complain that the Church is deprived of her pastor, when

you and Amsdorf are at Wittenberg? I only wish that every 1521.
Church were favoured with but a fourth part of you. Sing by night the song of the Lord which I sent you. I will sing it too without a care or solicitude about anything save the Word. He that is ignorant let him be ignorant: he that will perish let him perish, provided *we* are not lacking in our duty." "Behold," Luther wrote about the same period to Spalatin, "the hand of the mighty God of Jacob! whilst I was free the priests and monks raved: now I am a captive they tremble. 'Be still, and God will fight for you,' 'Make your supplication upon your bed and be still.'"

But his joy at the progress of the Gospel was changed into sorrow when he heard of the uproar which the University students had raised at Erfurth. Draco, one of those who had met the Reformer at the gate of the town, had been dragged by his surplice from amongst the choristers, of whom he was one, by Severian, a bigoted Papist, in resentment of which the students had attacked the houses of the priests, and committed much violence. "Such conduct," Luther complained to Melancthon, "is a shame and disgrace to our cause. Ah! we are but the fig-tree by the walls of Jerusalem, only leaves and words, until we act as we teach."

He used to date his letters "From the region of the birds," "From among the birds that sing sweetly on the boughs, and praise God with all their might night and day," or "From the place of my wandering," or "From the isle of Patmos," or "From my wilderness," or "Given at my mountain." Only Spalatin and Amsdorf knew of the actual place of his refuge: and the provost of the Castle used the utmost diligence, and with success, to prevent the secret from transpiring. Towards the end of September, indeed, the secret was communicated to Duke John: and soon afterwards the secretary of the Duke, by some means or other, got an ink-

1521. ling of the Reformer's whereabouts, and wrote to a woman of Torgau that he was concealed in the Wartburg;* but the suspicion thus excited passed off without any injurious results.

Before leaving Worms Luther had suffered very much from obstruction of the bowels; and now in the Wartburg this malady returned with extreme severity and pain. He regarded it as a correction from God; and blessed his name that "he did not leave him without the dear cross." But at times the apprehension which occasionally vexed him, that his seclusion was displeasing to God, gathered strength from this painful malady, which seemed a warning to go forth into active life again. Bodily indisposition was attended, as was usual with him, with spiritual trials: and he complained, that not only his body was still very weak, as at Worms, but also his spirit and his faith. On the 13th July, he wrote to Spalatin that for eight days he had suffered incredible pain, and, under the temptations of the flesh and the spirit, could neither write nor study: if the disorder continued he must go to Erfurth for medical advice, for "ten great wounds" would not be so bad as what he endured! "Pray for me! It is because I am alone, and you do not help me. Watch and pray!" He complained that often he could not pray for himself: but "sat insensible and hardened without a groan, without even a prayer for the Church of God." But the plague, which he himself thought very little of, for, "God," he said, "is everywhere," but which his friends estimated very differently, precluded his visit to Erfurth; and Spalatin, earnestly and repeatedly implored by Melancthon to consider Luther's danger,† sent him some pills which afforded some

* De Wette, II. p. 29.

† Bret. I. 418. O utinam hac vili animâ meâ ipsius vitam emere queam, quo nihil nunc habet orbis terrarum Θειότερον.

relief. Still the ailment was not overcome, but returned at 1521.
intervals, until the 6th October, when he pronounced himself recovered. "My stomach and mouth are reconciled. Thanks be to God!"

Luther's state of health will go far to account for the sensible assaults of Satan, and the preternatural sounds and noises which disturbed his quiet in the old castle. His apartment was divided from the other parts of the tower, and no one was allowed to approach him excepting two noble youths, who twice a day brought him food and drink. These attendants had brought him a bag of hazelnuts, which he placed in a chest, and ate of from time to time. He had withdrawn one night from his sitting apartment to his bedroom, and was laid down on his bed, when he was disturbed by an extraordinary commotion among the hazelnuts. They rolled and struck against one another with such violence, that they made the beams of the room to shake, and the bed on which Luther was lying to rattle. The same night, it would seem, although the steps leading to his solitary apartment were barred fast with iron chains and an iron door, so that no one could come up to them, after he had enjoyed a brief sleep he was suddenly awakened by a tremendous rumbling up and down the steps, which he describes as though threescore casks were rolling up and down. Luther, nothing doubting but that this was a machination of the devil, walked to the stairs head, and called aloud,—"Is it thou? Be it so, then! I commend me to the Lord Christ, of whom it is written in the eighth Psalm, 'Thou hast put all things under his feet.'" And having said this he retired again to his repose. Another tale of the turret chamber of the Wartburg, relates that the Provost's dame, who had been absent during the early part of Luther's sojourn, having heard it rumoured at Eisenach that he was her husband's guest, came to the Castle and insisted

1521. on being allowed to see the Reformer. It was not thought safe to entrust her with the secret: so Luther was removed to another apartment, and the Lady von Berlepsch occupied the room which had before been his. But in the night her rest was broken in upon with every kind of noise, as if a thousand devils were holding their orgies round her. It was also at a later period of his stay in the Wartburg, that Luther, whilst engaged in the study of the New Testament, and translating it from the Greek into German, was interrupted on more than one occasion by the baying of a dog at the door of his solitary room. The natural explanation is, that the Provost's dog was the intruder; but Luther was certain that no dog was near, or indeed could approach the door, and that it was the devil, who had assumed the form of a dog to molest him in his great work; and he silenced the baying by appealing to Christ. "That is the true way," said he, "to make satanical apparitions avaunt: show the devil you despise him, and call upon the Lord Christ." At another time the devil became a moth, fluttered round the candle, and flew buzzing round Luther's ears, who seized his inkstand and showered its contents over his wings.

For an ailing body and an overwrought mind John von Berlepsch deemed the open air and active exercise the best medicine, and he recommended Luther to try this prescription. He took Yunker George out hunting with him. Then the Reformer would amuse himself with searching for strawberries through the woods which clothed the sides of the mountain, where they abounded. Gradually becoming less anxious and cautious, the Provost assigned the Reformer a faithful and experienced attendant, in whose company he was permitted to visit the neighbouring towns and villages, and refresh himself in his ride at the inns or convents. On one occasion he was seated in the parlour of an inn, when some

books attracted his attention, and quickly laying aside his sword, he took up one of the volumes, opened it, and began reading, to the excessive annoyance of his companion, who admonished him to avoid such an unknightly act for the future, which could not fail to betray him if it were noticed. At the convent of Martschal, which he had before visited, he sat amongst his friends of the fraternity without being detected by any one. But at the convent of Rheinhardsbrunn, where it will be remembered he had rested a night in his journey to Worms, he was recognised by one of the lay brethren. The vigilant eye of the attendant promptly perceived this, and hinting to Luther that some particular business required his presence at a distant spot that evening, hurried him away and galloped home to the castle. But this adventure had the effect of circulating the intelligence that Luther was living in concealment somewhere in the neighbourhood of Eisenach: the Wartburg was suspected; and the visit of the Provost's dame was occasioned by this report, and also an examination of the Wartburg itself by a prince and some great ladies who had heard the tidings. Fortunately, however, when these last-mentioned strangers arrived Luther was absent. Sitting at a table buried deep in thought, he had been overheard to exclaim, "O that I were at Wittenberg!" and his host directed his attendant to escort him thither: and after remaining some days in concealment at Amsdorff's house, and conversing with his most intimate friends, he returned to the Wartburg without the secret of his retreat being divulged. 1521.

In his knight's attire, in his excursions, and in the hunting field, Luther was still Luther, engrossed with his theology. All he heard or saw ministered to the all-absorbing passion. "I have been engaged in hunting for two days," he wrote to Spalatin, "for I wished to experience that sweet and bitter pleasure of heroes. We took two hares and some poor par-

1521. tridges: an occupation for men who have plenty of time upon their hands. But amongst the nets and dogs I turned theologian, and as much pleasure as the mimicry afforded, so much pity and pain did the mystery it veiled mingle with it. For it is but a mimic show. Satan with his snares and dogs, his impious masters, bishops and divines, hunts the innocent for his prey. I had a vivid sense of this sad mystery of simple and faithful souls. And the mystery grew more terrible when, after I had saved one leveret alive, and hid it in the sleeve of my coat, and removed to a little distance, the dogs scented out their victim, sprang up at it, broke its leg and throttled it. It is thus that Satan and the Pope rage. The souls that I would fain rescue they destroy, and care nought for my pains. I have had enough of hunting, and deem it sweeter sport to strike down, with javelin and arrow, bears, wolves, boars, and foxes, and such kind of vile teachers. It is, however, a solace to me that it is a mystery savouring of salvation that hares and innocent beasts should be caught by man rather than by bears, wolves, and rapacious hawks, and their counterparts Bishops and Divines. That would be a capture for hell, the other denotes a capture for heaven. I mention to you this similitude, to let you understand that you courtiers who pursue your prey, are a prey yourselves. Christ, the best huntsman, with great pains is trying to catch you and save you. You are yourselves a sport whilst you sport in hunting."*

Nothing could exceed the attention of the Provost to his prisoner: the best of everything was placed on Luther's table: but this very profusion made him anxious to know at whose cost he was living in his wilderness. "I care not where I may be," he wrote to Spalatin, "provided I am not burden-

* De Wette, II. p. 43.

some to others. But I cannot endure that any one should be 1521.
put to expense on my account. And if it were not my belief that I am maintained at the expense of our Prince, I would not remain here another hour and consume the substance of my guardian who supplies me with everything with the greatest alacrity and cheerfulness. If I am to waste any one's wealth, let it be the wealth of princes. For it is unavoidable but a prince must be in some measure a robber; and how much the more a prince, so much the more a robber. Inform me upon this point." Luther made the best return he could to his host: and twice every Sunday preached to him and to such of his friends in the Castle, or from the neighbourhood, as were allowed the privilege of being present as being judged trustworthy. Then he would retire to his solitary room, and read and write. Sometimes day succeeded to day and night to night, and the Reformer, immersed in the study of the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures, or occupied with one of his writings, would forget the lapse of time in the ardour of his interest. At other times his pen would be laid aside, his books lie unopened, and he would be quite prostrated, and the fire of his energy for a time overpowered by the force of his temptations of the flesh and spirit. At such periods he wrote in the deepest melancholy, and with something of reproach to his friends, urging them to pray for him. "I am exposed to a thousand Satans in this idle wilderness." "Multitudes of malicious and crafty devils scoff at me and rob me of my time." "I have more than one Satan with me, or rather against me, whilst I am thus alone: but sometimes I am not alone." Luther passed from one extreme to another, toiling for some days without intermission, then lost in dejection, partly physical, partly of a spiritual origin, brooding over the woes of the Church, groaning under his own trials from his "untamed flesh," and lamenting his sinful idleness.

1521. What he really achieved with his pen during his ten months of exile must appear to ordinary minds almost incredible. Having written a commentary on the 68th Psalm, finished his exposition of the 22nd Psalm,* in which the herald had found him engaged when he summoned him to Worms, and having also concluded his comments on the Magnificat, he composed a sermon on Confession, for the edification of the Provost, and then enlarged the sermon into a book for general reading.† Œcolampadius, he found, had anticipated him in the subject, and he received his tract from Spalatin, and admired the "free, confident, and Christian spirit" in which it was written, and was pleased that the Swiss divine and himself had fallen on the same line of argument. Luther dedicated this treatise to Frank Sickengen, his "special lord and patron." He affirmed in it that he could not discover any Scriptural warrant whatever for the confession of sins to the Pope, a bishop, or priest. The injunction simply declared—"Confess your faults one to another." So that, according to Scripture, the Pope himself must make confession of his own sins, as well as the meanest Christian. He sent also some theses on confession to Wittenberg for disputation: but the Elector prohibited any discussion being held on the subject, which gave great displeasure to Luther, and induced him to warn Melancthon not to heed the Court much: "had he himself heeded it, he should never have done half that he had done." On some spare space of the last sheet of the Treatise on Confession, he wrote a commentary on the 119th Psalm, but

* Nam Psalmum xxi. antea misi completum ad typos suos. The reading should evidently be Psalmum xxii., for Psalm xxi. had been completed long before.

† He also wrote an address to those who were questioned at the confessional, whether they had any of his books. Walch. XIX. pp. 1007—1015.

retained it to give it the last touch, when he sent the other 1521.
productions of this date to Spalatin for publication.* The 119th Psalm contained, he observed, 176 verses; and yet it was all summed up in two things: first, that God must be the teacher; secondly, to beware of man's teaching.

He next turned his attention to Latomus' Vindication of the judgment of the University of Louvain, and in twelve days finished his "Confutation," which must ever be ranked amongst the ablest of his writings. He dedicated this work to Justus Jonas, who, by the death of Henning Goden, had just been appointed Provost of All Saints' Collegiate Church, a post of importance as giving supervision over thirty churches.† He implored Jonas, in his epistle dedicatory, "like Aaron in his sacred vestments, so clothed in the robe of Holy Scripture, the censer of prayer in his hands, to stand between the living and the dead, and stay the devastation of the Roman fire."

Luther expressed his gratitude to God, in the commencement of this treatise, for the sure and certain conviction vouchsafed to him that the Pope is the Antichrist foretold in Scripture, and the universities synagogues of Satan, "wherein sophistical divines, Epicurean hogs, bear rule." Latomus had introduced in his work an old man, who, with what he characterised as great wisdom, proposed three modes for mending the morals of the Bishop of Rome: the first, to cease making unworthy demands, and each one to correct his own failings: the second, prayer: the third, patience. The first, Luther replied, is the modus optativus, thinking that we may think; as for instance, if an ass could but fly, an ass would have wings; if the people did not make unworthy demands, the

* See his letter of June 10. De Wette, II. p. 16.

† The Provost was required to lecture on Canon Law, which Jonas refused to do without hindrance to his appointment.

1521. Pope would become a better man. "What! Are the sheep to feed themselves, the people to direct themselves, and lead their shepherd to the pasture, and show their footprints to guide their guardian!" As to the second mode, no one is prayed for more universally than the Pope: as to the third, no tyranny has been endured with such long-continued patience as his. So what does the counsel of Latomus' wiseacre amount to? Luther proceeds, "Quoth Latomus, 'You excite sedition, and you do not make men better by your preaching.' The argument of the Jews! They objected to Christ that he stirred up the people, and men did not become a whit the better for his doctrine; nay, they became worse. Was Christ silent on such grounds? or is there any truth in the inference, 'They will not hear, therefore you must hold your peace?' But what assurance is there that no one is made better? The sedition which wastes the body is dreaded, the sedition which wastes the soul is unthought of!" Latomus had especially decried Luther's statement that every good act of man is really sin: and the "Confutation" is principally taken up with defending and explaining in all its bearings this theological verity. "Scripture," Luther said, "declares it emphatically in pronouncing of God, 'In thy sight can no man living be justified.' By sin is meant what is contrary to the law of God. The Fathers of the Church, for the most part gently, spoke of failings and infirmities: but Augustine, in round terms, after the example of Scripture, called failings and infirmities by their true names, sins and iniquities. In Christ, however, there is a complete refuge for him who knows that he can do no good thing: and that God has commanded what no man can perform. In substitution for man's guilt there is Christ's righteousness: in place of that wrath, which every act of every man deserves, but which the blood of Christ has quenched, there is the grace of the Holy Spirit. And he who

is under wrath is wholly under wrath: and he who is under 1521.
grace is wholly under grace. God does nothing by halves. The righteousness begun in the Christian by the Holy Spirit must ever adhere to the righteousness of Christ, and as a wave from the ocean, flow from him, and roll back towards him, for his righteousness is certain and perpetual, without any failing or infirmity."

At the close, the Reformer returned to Jonas. "My dear Jonas, I have done with Latomus, and send him to you, to spare myself further trouble, for I have begun the Exposition of the Gospels and Epistles in German, which is the reason why I was annoyed to have to read and reply to his jargon. At some other time I may answer all that he has said: but at present in my exile I am without books, and am under that sentence of the masters of heresy, that Jews should read the Bible only. I have only the Bible with me. Not that I make much account of being without other books; but I should have examined, had it been in my power, whether the quotations from the Fathers are honestly made by my adversary. He cites Dionysius on praying to God for the dead, whereas I very well remember that the passage simply refers to giving thanks to God in their behalf. But why not some of you reply to the remainder? Why not you yourself? Or what is Amsdorf about? I have crushed the head, why not some of you trample the serpent's body?"

The "Confutation" finished, Luther hastened on with his translation of the Postils from Latin into German; and to those for the four Sundays in Advent, which he had to translate, he intended to add six Sundays more, and then have the whole ten published together.* He deemed the Postils of primary importance. But his attention was divided by fresh

* De Wette, II. p. 33.

1521. material for controversy. On the 15th April the condemnation of his opinions had been pronounced by the University of Paris. The theological Faculty enumerated the heretics who had disturbed the peace of the Church from the earliest age, and ended with Martin Luther, who, if the "Babylonian Captivity," and the other works bearing his name, were really his, had united in his sentiments some portion of all the heresies of preceding times. An index of matter, and the citation, under separate heads, of propositions drawn from the Reformer's writings, seemed to imply that the work of condemnation had not been executed carelessly or hastily. But it was also known that three Doctors, Beda, Quercus, and Christophorus,* had originated the condemnation, and that others of the Faculty had expressed disapprobation. And the Sorbonne had given no better reason for their sentence than —"This is absurd—This is heretical." In order that this judgment might not weigh with the public, from the character for erudition enjoyed by the Sorbonne, Melanethon immediately replied to it with great point and acuteness. He proved the Masters of the Sorbonne to be really the heretics instead of Luther; he told them that any German school-boy could cobble up a refutation as good as theirs out of Gabriel and Scotus; that it was most absurd to call, as they had done, University decrees, sayings of Fathers of the Church, and decrees of Councils, the first principles of the Christian faith; that it mattered little what Paris thought, what was required was a sufficient reason for her thinking as she did; that it was plain they had never read Augustine; that they had misinterpreted the author of the "Calling of the Gentiles," whether Ambrose or some other Father; and that of Scripture they knew nothing whatever. Their vocation was rather to

* Named by Luther Bellua, Stercus, and Christotomos.

make drains than to handle divinity. Luther read with delight 1521.
Melancthon's reply, and set himself to work to translate it into German for popular reading, appending notes, as he went on, derisive of the "Parisian asses." And shortly afterwards "The Comedy of Luther, condemned by the Stupid and Sacrilegious Sorbonne; or, The Second Determination of the Sorbonne in condemnation of Philip Melancthons's Apology," made its appearance, the product probably of Luther's humorous hours in his retreat. It consisted of three parts or books: the first, a parody of the condemnation of Luther, a proposition from Melancthon's work being recited, and then the verdict of the Faculty, delivered upon it in the pompous and self-satisfied style of the all-authoritative Sorbonne; the second book gave the reasons why the judgment of the Sorbonne *must* be correct; and the third demonstrated that the only reliable authority in the world was the Sorbonne.

Luther had directed Amsdorf to reply to Emser, who had again attacked him in the "Quadruplia;" but, considering what a "captious, cavilling Satan" dwelt in the he-goat as "in an appropriate vessel," he at last answered him himself. The topic for argument between Emser and Luther at this time was, the nature of the Christian priesthood, which the Reformer insisted appertained to every Christian in common. And he also wrote a commentary on the bull "In Cænâ Domini," as a new year's wish or present for the Pope.

It must not be thought surprising that Luther spent some of his hours in his solitude in giving vent to his inexhaustible humour and talent for satire. It was a relief to his own mind under the weight of overpowering thoughts; and he knew the influence which the ridiculous exercises upon public sentiment. Germany was inundated with writings of this kind at this period, as if the profound spirit of the national convictions was working itself clear of the dregs of heat and

1521. irritation through such a channel. Never had Hutten tried his pen more felicitously than in his "Conclave of Theologers against the Friends of Germany and of Literature, held at Cologne." Various expedients are suggested by the different theologians for relieving Eck from his embarrassments, who gives a piteous tale of his case to the meeting, and for staying the progress of the evangelical opinions. One proposes a ghostly apparition of St. Thomas, to proclaim the tenets of the Roman Church to be in strict accordance with his own infallible wisdom—a spiritual artifice not beyond the knowledge or experience of the religious orders. Another intimates that a cardinal's red robe, or a bishop's crozier, would be the most likely means to quiet Luther. The aged Hochstraten (Hochstrata), who presides, discovers something to detract from the value of every suggestion, and finally dismisses the conclave, by pronouncing the Faculty of Theology at Cologne extinct. Another popular dialogue represented Eck in a lamentable plight from sickness and remorse, and attended by a physician, a barber, and a confessor. The confessor, instead of hearing, as he expects, a confession of sins from the ailing divine, hears a list of Eck's academical titles and polemical triumphs, and only by the utmost dint of persevering ingenuity extorts from him the various base motives which induced him to oppose Luther. The barber shaves his head, and looks aghast to find it inscribed up and down with propositions, syllogisms, and the complete science of scholasticism. The physician gives him an emetic; and he vomits up the load from his stomach in the form of bulls, briefs, and decretals, &c.: and a purgative draught produces no less astonishing results.

Luther also composed, during his banishment at his Patmos, an "Instruction on Baptism;" and a brief treatise "Against the falsely called spiritual rank of the Pope and Bishops," in

which he promulgated his own bull excommunicating the 1521.
Pope and Bishops, and pronouncing those who upheld them to be "servants of the devil," and those who would annihilate their antichristian rule to be "God's dear children." Jesus Christ, he said, had expressly forbidden all such dominion and authority as were exercised by the Princes of the Gentiles over the Gentiles. The objection against a return to the simple institution of the Church as founded by Christ, seemed to lie in the difficulty which the nobility would have in providing for their children if bishoprics were done away with. To obviate this, he proposed that the eldest son, as among the Jews, should inherit the largest portion of the father's property, and that the other children, who were not to be without their share, should be placed on a par with the burghers. For "it never could end in good for the nobility to intermarry solely with the nobility." He was requested by Spalatin,—who had first applied to Melancthon, and had been by him referred to Luther,—to write a consolatory treatise for the Elector under his many and increasing trials; but this he declined to do, alleging that he had already framed a work with this object, the "Tessaradecas." But he composed a treatise, at the solicitation of Duke John, on the injunction of Christ to the ten lepers whom he had healed, to "go and show themselves to the priests," in which the Papists asserted that the doctrine of private confession was inculcated. It seems, moreover, that at this period the Reformer wrote an exposition of John vi. 37—40,* for the instruction of the Saxon court, at the desire of Spalatin. But his industry was not seconded by the Elector's secretary with any kindred zeal in forwarding the printing of his writings. The Elector was apprehensive of offending the Emperor by in-

* See Walch. VII. pp. 2565—2575.

1521. fringing the edict, and the printing was intentionally postponed, to Luther's excessive annoyance; so that he was obliged to expostulate strongly with Spalatin, and insist on compliance with his wishes. But even when he received his Treatise on Confession, printed by John Luft of Wittenberg, he was vexed by discovering the grossest inaccuracies in the execution, and directed that the Postils should be printed by Lotther.

A brief writing of this period, in a catechetical form, gives his "extempore answers" to propositions alleged against him as heretical by his adversaries, taken from his "Babylonian Captivity," and his "Assertion." It is valuable as a concise representation of his doctrines.

Question. The bread and wine remain in the Sacrament of the altar; and there is no transubstantiation?

Luther. I do not condemn such an opinion; but deny it to be an article of faith, for there is no such doctrine as transubstantiation in Scripture: but the body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament.

Q. The Sacrament is not entire and perfect in one kind only?

Luther. Not as regards the kinds, but perfect as regards the substance. The whole of Christ is in either kind; but the Sacrament is not perfect without both.

Q. All persons are impious who object to the laity communicating in both kinds?

Luther. Yes; they are guilty of a breach of the institution of Christ.

Q. It is a palpable and impious error to offer mass for the dead?

Luther. Truly so as regards the mass or sacrament itself; but not as regards prayer in the Sacrament. For it is the nature of the Sacrament that each one must partake of it for himself; he cannot do so for another.

Q. A baptized person cannot, if he will, lose salvation by any sins whatever, provided he have faith? 1521.

Luther. Because faith does away with all sins; and he who has faith cannot sin wilfully.

Q. No one has a right to impose anything upon a Christian without his consent; and whatever is so imposed, is imposed in a tyrannical spirit?

Luther. Clearly so; for Paul says (Coloss. ii.), "Beware lest any man spoil you, after the tradition of men."

Q. It is not necessary to confess one's secret sins to a prelate or priest; but it is lawful to disclose such sins to any brother or sister?

Luther. Because the duty of confessing such sins cannot be proved from Holy Scripture.

Q. Whoever shall confess his sins of his own accord to any brother privately, and shall amend his life, is absolved from all his sins?

Luther. Yes; for Christ says to all Christians, "Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Q. The circumstances of sins, the time, place, person, and all that is external are equal, and to be entirely disregarded?

Luther. Christ has made no mention of such points in his law.

Q. The single circumstance to be considered is, that sin has been done?

Luther. Yes; God accepteth no man's person.

Q. Marriage cannot be prohibited, nor when contracted be dissolved, for any cause except too near affinity or consanguinity?

Luther. So the law of God declares, although the law of the Pope says otherwise.

Q. All baptized Christians are equally priests, that is, have the same power in the Word and Sacraments?

1521. *Luther.* For Peter declares (1 Peter ii.), "Ye are a royal priesthood." But they do not all enjoy the functions of the ministry, but only those ordained to that power.

Q. Any deacon or layman may ordain priests, consecrate churches and bells, and confirm children?

Luther. That is, these meaner offices ought to be committed to those of less account in the Church; not to bishops, whose business is to preach the Gospel.

Luther's almost superhuman energy in controversial and theological writings did not prevent his keeping a steady eye on the course of events. In him the man of study and the man of action were united. His large correspondence kept him accurately and promptly informed of all that was passing amongst the reforming party; the movements in the Papist body were also known to him; and every rumour of public events was carried to his mountain. On most of these, as they occurred, his letters preserve his spontaneous judgments, delivered with his characteristic turn of thought. The death of a bishop who had been one of his most virulent opponents at Worms, he interpreted as a sign of God's wrath and indignation against the Papists. On hearing that Charles' chief chamberlain was dead, and had left his master a million of gold pieces, "How confident," he exclaimed, "is Christ, that he is not appalled by mountains of gold!" The insurrection in Spain, and the war with France, which had already broken out in Navarre and in the Low Countries, drew from him the prophecy, that the Emperor would continue to be entangled in wars throughout his career; that he would never enjoy prosperity; but would pay the penalty of the impiety of others for repudiating to the face by their counsel the truth at Worms: and that Germany would be involved in calamity with him, because she had assented to impiety.*

* De Wette, II. p. 30.

"But God will know his own." His eye rested continually 1521.
on Wittenberg, where the horizon seemed the brightest with hope. Philip was lecturing in the Colossians, Amsdorf in the Hebrews. "How I wish," Luther wrote to them, "that I could be a scholar in your lecture-room." He suggested that a sermon should be delivered on the afternoons of Saints' days, to keep the people from the games and drinking which had converted the holidays of the Church to a use very different from that which they had been intended to serve. And sensible of the importance of religious culture for society generally, and especially that most influential portion of it, the wife, mother, and sister, he entreated Melancthon, after the example of Origen, to establish a lecture in the Scriptures for women only, and to become "a German bishop as he was already a Latin bishop." He was desirous of re-introducing lay-preaching according to the custom of the primitive Church. It was his constant regret and complaint that Melancthon, with a wife and children, was so slenderly furnished with the needful, and he was repeatedly demanding an increase of salary for him from the Court. Then the plague was reported to be at Wittenberg; and his affection took the alarm lest Philip, on whom, under God, his hopes for Germany were built, should be cut off, and his safety was to be at once provided for by his temporary removal to a distance. So richly did he deem Wittenberg endowed with labourers in the Gospel field, that he projected himself undertaking the office of theological teacher at Cologne or at Erfurth, or of travelling as a missionary through Germany, as soon as ever he should quit his concealment. And it is a proof how alive he had become to the necessities of the times, that almost all his works in the Wartburg were written in German. Yet notwithstanding the daily progress of the Reformation, his mind was full of forebodings of evil. His friend Lupin Rhadheim, to whom, together with Carlstadt, he had dedi-

1521. cated his Commentary on the Galatians, had been called to rest. "How I envy him," Luther exclaimed, "his happy death! I see daily more and more clearly from my watch-tower the signs of God's wrath, which is so great against a wicked generation, that I fear few except infants are saved from the jaws of Satan."

But if all Germany passed under Luther's review from his mount of observation, the Reformer himself, although absent in flesh, was never more really present in spirit with his countrymen than at this epoch. From the heights of the Wartburg, say his French biographers, he loomed upon the eye of all Germany.* A remarkable stage had been reached in the progress of the Reformation, that transition period in mental revolutions, when thoughts which have long animated one heart are transferred with such vital power to the hearts of others as to cause their presentation no longer in mere word or writing, but in act and life; and the field of speculation is changed for that of practice. None of these alterations in religious and social life were indeed made at Luther's direct instigation: on the contrary, the part which he played in reference to them was to moderate and control, rather than to stimulate and impel, but they were not the less legitimate deductions from his system of doctrine. Some extravagant abuses of his teaching were attempted, as is natural in a period of commotion; for ambitious and unscrupulous men are everywhere to be found, who are sure to seize the opportunity which such a state of things holds out to them, for deluding others and aggrandizing themselves. But with these excesses Luther is by no means chargeable: on the contrary, he used his utmost endeavours and exerted all his influence to nip the evil in the bud. And it is thus from this point in his history that

* "Il plaine invisible du haut du château."—Michelet. I. p. 93. Audin, II. p. 138.

some of the most distinctive features of his character, which 1521.
had before lain obscured, are drawn out by the force of circumstances, and placed in a strong light.

The first open inroad on the papal system was the infringement of the law of clerical celibacy. Three priests, Bartholomew Bernard Feldkirchen, as already alluded to, and a pastor in the Mansfeld district, and James Seidler, pastor of Glashutte, with the sanction of their respective Churches, entered upon the married state. Feldkirchen, being pastor of Kemberg, within the civil jurisdiction of the Elector of Saxony, appealed from the Archbishop of Mentz, who had expressed himself dissatisfied with his reasons for violating the customs of the Roman Church, as stated in a letter addressed to him,* to Frederic; and he found so much favour with the Elector, that when the Archbishop demanded that the culprit should be sent to him to Halle, the answer was returned that the Elector would not act the part of a constable. But Seidler and the Mansfeld pastor were less fortunate.† Being under the jurisdiction of Duke George of Saxony, Seidler was delivered up by that prince to the Bishop of Misnia, who consigned him to prison, where he died or was put to death, and the Mansfeld married clergyman was thrown into prison by the Archbishop of Mentz. It has been seen that the marriage of the secular clergy in these first instances at once received the approbation of Luther. It was decisive in his eyes that the Scriptures called the prohibition of matrimony "a doctrine of devils;" and there was no self-imposed vow of celibacy in the case of the secular clergy as in the case of the monks. Germany‡ had been very reluctant to obey the Pope

* This was written for Feldkirchen by Melancthon. See it in Walch. XV. pp. 2354, &c.

† Bretschneider, I. pp. 418, &c.

‡ Et accepit jugum hoc infelix Germania sero admodum nec nisi coacta.—Feldkirchen's Apology.

1521. in the matter of celibacy from the first; and the Reformer had the vivid German appreciation of domestic life; and, writing from the Wartburg to his friend Gerbel, the lawyer, of Strasburg, to congratulate him on having entered the conjugal state, observes, "Even in the depths of poverty matrimony appears to me a paradise." But this beginning of throwing off the papal yoke could not stop short at one class or one tyrannical restriction.

The renouncing of the monastic vow by several monks of the Augustine Order soon followed. This was done at the fervent recommendation of Gabriel Zwilling or Didymus, a brother of the fraternity, who had been elevated into consequence by his pulpit talents in Luther's absence—for, notwithstanding a small stature and a very slender voice, he was possessed of an attractive popular eloquence; and he proclaimed to his Order, in the little Augustine church at Wittenberg, that "there was no salvation under the cowl." And it shortly appeared that public opinion went with him in this denunciation. Such monks as seceded from the convent were received into society with general welcome and applause; whilst the lingerers in the Augustine and Carmelite monasteries in the town fell under such violent displeasure from the students and townspeople that they were in constant dread of an attack upon their asylums. Before long the Augustine monastery* became deserted by all except Conrad Helt, the prior, who alone did not relish the new proceedings; and the

* The Augustines of Misnia and Thuringia in December or January, 1521-2, resolved—1. That each monk might remain in his cloister or not, as he pleased, for "in Christ there was neither Jew nor Greek, monk nor layman." 2. Might please himself in garb and food. 3. That love should be guide in all things. 4. That beggary be abolished. 5. That such monks as had the gift of preaching should devote themselves to that office; the rest learn some handicraft to support themselves and their brethren. 6. Obedience should be shown to the superior from love, to avoid scandals.—Walch. XV. p. 2333.

Elector forwarded invitations to monks in Misnia and else- 1521.
where to come and occupy the vacant cells.

Carlstadt had openly declared himself in some theses in favour of the abolition of the monastic vow: but his reasons were not satisfactory to Luther's mind. Melancthon also entertained the same sentiments as Carlstadt; and letters on this and other subjects, now prominently thrown into the crucible of popular discussion, were continually passing between Wittenberg and the Wartburg. But notwithstanding, Luther was at first disposed to place himself in the gap, and stay the work of demolition: his temper was strongly conservative; all that he had already done had, in fact, been conservative, in restoration, or rather, in retention, in act as well as in profession, of the Divine authority of the Scriptures: and all that he had done had been accompanied by sharp pangs of self-accusation and reproach, which nothing but a sense of duty had availed to compose and overcome. And he now felt, that to throw open the convent gates to the monks and nuns, and let each who would settle down in some domestic sphere, would be not only a blow at the foundations of Popery, but an entire revolution in Christian society. He anticipated, what hasty innovators always overlook, the great peril which must ever attend the loosening an important stone in an old fabric. "What!" he exclaimed, "let the monks take wives! At least they shall not obtrude a wife upon me!" "The friars," he wrote to Melancthon, "have of their own accord preferred a life of celibacy. They are not like the priests ordained of God, and so absolved from the commandments of men." But as he pondered on the subject with more searching deliberation, the recollection of his own conventual life came powerfully before his mind—the idleness, gluttony, and licentiousness, which his own experience had proved to him were the usual inmates of the cloister—and a ray of hope broke in upon his reveries, that, perhaps, even now Providence might

1521. be preparing a way for the rescue of thousands of souls from "the hell of the monastery." In his own visits of inspection as temporary superintendent, he had always acted upon the principle that a vow undertaken before the age of discretion was not binding. But what he required, was to release others, as well as the very young, from a chain which galled soul and body. He fell upon his knees and prayed earnestly that the Lord Jesus would vouchsafe his teaching, and of his mercy grant that freedom which he alone could bestow. In this examination of the subject, he proposed to himself a simple but conclusive question, "Is the monastic vow conformable or otherwise to the spirit of the Gospel and the Word of God?" And, by applying this test, he arrived at the conclusion, that the monastic vow, if based on the notion of human merit, and the supposition that God's anger is appeased by the denial of passions which he has himself implanted in the breast, must be opposed, not more to nature, than to the fundamental doctrine of Scripture, salvation by Christ alone through faith, and therefore quite irreconcileable with the primary obligation of obedience to the Divine Word.

Melancthon had tried the solution of the question by another mode, and dwelt on the impossibility of fulfilling the vow as decisive against it. Luther rejected this reasoning, because all the commands of God are, in strict language, impossible of fulfilment, but they are not on that account not binding. "The difference," he wrote to Philip, "between the commands of God and the monastic vow is, that the latter is self-imposed. Make that, then, your ground of dispensing with it, and not the impossibility of fulfilment." But even so, he was not satisfied. "We must annul the vow," he said, "not *à posteriori*, but *à priori*." He was resolved so thoroughly to sift the subject, as to satisfy his own conscience and the consciences of others, that the overthrow of monasticism was

demanded by the principles of Sacred Writ. He dreaded 1521.
nothing more than hasty acts undertaken, not on the verdict of conscience, but the spur of some excited feeling, which, with the excitement, would be sure to pass away, and leave the mind to the stings and goads of a wounded conscience. The solution which he had already arrived at, was satisfactory to his judgment as far as it went; but it did not release all monks and nuns from their self-imposed obligations, but only those who had incurred them under the mistaken idea that the cowl and the veil are a passport to heaven. The question was thus left to be determined by the individual conscience, for, if the vow had not been undertaken under such an illusion, the command remained unrepealed, "Vow, and pay unto the Lord thy vows." He anxiously longed for a meeting with Melancthon in some secret place, to discuss and decide upon a point of such extreme moment. But gradually he assumed a more decided position; and without any reference to individual intention, pronounced the vow itself, in every case, impious. "It is certain," he subsequently wrote to Melancthon, "that the vow is in itself impious. We have only to trust wholly in the Gospel. I thank our gracious Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, for the firm and unhesitating conviction which he has afforded me." His long process of reflection on this subject was marked at the different stages, by the writings which he gave to the public: first, "Conclusions on Vows and the Spiritual Life of the Cloister;" secondly, "Considerations and Information respecting the Monastic and other Vows;" and last, came his mature and final judgment, in a treatise "On Spiritual and Monastic Vows."*

This work was dedicated to his father, John Luther, in a striking letter. He assured his dear father that there was now nothing of which he was so strongly convinced, as of the reli-

* It was printed in the January following.

1521. gious obligation of a command from God. He had been a monk for nearly sixteen years. He had entered the convent in his twenty-second year, contrary to his father's wish. Terrors from heaven, not love of the belly, had driven him to such a step; and he had uttered an enforced vow under the dread of immediate death. But his father's expostulation with him, "Did you never hear that children should obey their parents?" had sunk deep into his heart. God, however, had overruled all for good. He had become a monk to learn what the wisdom and sanctity of the monastery are by his own experience; and although his life had not been without sin, it had been without crime. "Well, then," he continued, "you are still a father, and I a son; all my vows are worthless. On your side is Divine authority, on mine nothing but human presumption. Celibacy, which they applaud with bursting cheeks, is nothing without obedience to God's commands. It is nowhere enjoined; obedience to God is everywhere enjoined. Celibacy has been tricked out by Papist art in feathers stolen from conjugal chastity. Will you, then, my dear father, now exert your parental authority to release me from the monastery? To give you no cause to boast, the Lord has been beforehand with you, and has himself released me. I may still, indeed, wear the monk's garb and tonsure, but what of that? The cowl belongs to me, not I to the cowl. My conscience is free, and that is the true and real freedom. I am, therefore, now a monk, and yet no monk, a new creature, not of the Pontiff, but of Christ. Christ is my Bishop, Abbot, Prior, Lord, Father, and Master. I know no other any more. And I trust that he took one son from you, that through that one he may comfort many of his sons. What greater joy could you experience! And what if the Pope should kill me, or sentence me to hell! Once killed, he will never be able to raise me to life and kill me again; and as for his sentence, I pray that I may so sin in his eyes, as to

sin unto death, and never be absolved by him. I am con- 1521.
fident the day is approaching when that kingdom of abomination and perdition shall fall. How glorious to be accounted worthy to be the first victims of the fire or the sword, that our blood might cry to heaven and hasten the day of his destruction. But if we be not counted worthy to seal our testimony with our blood, at least let us pray and entreat for this mercy to bear testimony with our life, and with our voice, that Jesus Christ is our only Lord God, blessed for ever! Amen. In whom, farewell, beloved father, and salute my mother, your Margaret, with all my kinsfolk in Christ."

Luther's position in his Treatise is, that the whole monastic life is built upon lies. Vows were to be kept, but only true vows. The vow of St. Paul, in the Acts, was nothing but a vestige of the ancient Jewish law. St. Anthony, the prince of monks, had taught that nothing should be attempted on any authority but that of Scripture; and so he lived in the desert unwedded, but bound by no vow of celibacy. Now, Christ declared, as to the way of salvation, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Monasticism had fabricated some other way. Monasticism turned Scripture into a lie in other points. It distinguished between the counsels and the precepts of the Gospel, and also between the state of perfection and the state of imperfection of the Christian life. Celibacy was the state of perfection, and the precepts were addressed to all, the counsels only to such as might be disposed to listen to them in order to earn a higher condition of bliss hereafter. All these distinctions were lies. The Evangelist declared Christ went up into a mountain, sat down, opened his mouth, and taught. To teach must be to deliver precepts. And Christ himself declared of his teaching, "Whosoever shall break one of the least of these *commandments*, and teach men so, the same shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven."

1521. He called "commands" what the Roman Sodom and Gomorrah entitled "counsels." Christ said, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him, lest at any time thine adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Here was a punishment and an eternal one denounced; but the moles and bats of Paris would know that a punishment could not be threatened for neglecting a counsel. As to celibacy being "the state of perfection, salvation, and glory," as Monasticism babbled, Christ and his Apostles attributed all to faith, and never spoke of celibacy as a more perfect state or anything meritorious in itself, but only as more free from cares and the tribulation of the flesh, and therefore better adapted for preaching God's Word and making progress in faith. Celibacy was represented in Scripture as the handmaid of faith and other Christian graces; but nothing more. But out of the numerous counsels of Christ, as Monkery styled his commands, the Papists had selected three, and only three—obedience, poverty, and chastity—as the subjects of a special vow. But the monkish vow of obedience meant the overthrow of all obedience. It would run, if it spoke truly, thus—"O God, I vow that I will not, as thy Gospel bids me, be subject to all my superiors, but, instead of that, to only one." The votaries of poverty were notoriously the most avaricious and the wealthiest of mankind. Chastity only remained to the professors of "the state of perfection," and the adherents to the "counsels;" but theirs was a chastity drowned in lusts. The monastic vow, moreover, contradicted faith, for it denied Christ, and said, "I am Christ, I can save myself by my own works." It contradicted Christian liberty, charity, obedience to parents, and the love of one's neighbour. It contradicted

reason, "that gross light of nature, too dull to be a sure guide in affirmatives, but infallible in negatives," which proved its fulfilment impossible. And it was a blasphemy against baptism—"the all in all of Christians," for the baptismal vow contained in its terms the whole of a Christian's duties. At the conclusion reference was made to the passage in St. Paul's first Epistle to Timothy,* wherein, speaking of widows, he says, "When they have begun to wax wanton against Christ they will marry, having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith." Such a passage did not contain any warrant for vows, for the widows in question were under no vow, nor did St. Paul object to their re-marrying, on the contrary, he said, "I will therefore that the younger widows marry;" but his objection was to their marrying heathen husbands, which he called "waxing wanton against Christ," and "casting off their first faith." 1521.

It was not to be expected that in the bandying of reproaches between two rival creeds, such as Romanism and Protestantism, the first deviation in act from the system of the former, furnishing an easy loophole for misrepresentation, would be allowed to pass without severe strictures from its devotees. Aleander remarked, that "the contest was that of the flesh against the Spirit;" and from his day down to the present, Romanists have not ceased to deery the Reformation as a movement originating in carnal motives, and to ground their assertion on this very fact, that the evangelical clergy, as their first overt act of secession from Popery, took to themselves wives, and that Luther himself eventually became a married man. It has even been asserted that Luther's motive in entering on and prosecuting the career of a Reformer was simply this: to cease to be a monk, and to

* 1 Tim. v.

1521. marry. But such a supposition is too preposterous to be seriously combated: it is so utterly incomprehensible and incredible, that Luther's groans over his spiritual corruptions in his cell at Erfurth, his agonizing investigation of the great difficulty, "How can a man be just with God?" his standing alone at Worms, exposed to countless perils, risking his life and all he had on earth, with the intervening acts in his history, were all based on a shrewd, selfish calculation of carnal gratification, to be realised in the obscure and distant future. If a man can believe this, he is far removed beyond the reach of argument.

But the attack on the Reformation itself, that is, on its maintainers generally, on the ground just stated, carries with it a greater semblance of probability. The objection, however, on this score, is at once done away with, if it is borne in mind that impurity in the priestly character was not only recognised and allowed by the Pope, but made a subject of gain, a taxable indulgence whence a revenue was derived to the Holy See :* and that concubinage was practised from the Pope himself to the lowest grade of the ecclesiastical corporation, so notoriously, that in most cases the veil of decency was judged superfluous. M. Audin himself observes, that the clergy who married took to themselves as wives, for the most part, the women who had previously been their concubines. Where, then, is the gratification of the flesh? The marriage knot was substituted in place of a conventional *liaison :* the conscience was relieved; it had before been callous: the truths which the Reformation unsealed and disclosed made it tender and suscep-

* Article XCI. of the "Centum Gravamina" stated,—"That in most places Bishops and their officials not only tolerated concubinage, upon paying money, in the more dissolute sort of monks, but exacted it also in the more continent, saying, it was now at their choice to have concubines or not."

tible; but there was no other difference of any account. And 1521.
this description of the wives of the evangelical clergy will equally apply to the wives of the monks on M. Audin's own statement, which is, that the monks passed from the refectory to the kitchen, from the library to the dining-room, and made their cook or their waiting woman the partner of their married life;* which, considering the moral condition of the monasteries, as painted from the life by Erasmus and Hutten, and other writers of the time, who knew their subject well, simply means, that the monks followed in the footprints of the secular clergy. Again, it may be confidently asked, What gratification of the flesh is there here? Instead of a vow which was habitually broken, and was only an inlet to unfettered carnality, a vow is mutually undertaken which restricts every roving propensity by its direction to one special and exclusive object. And certainly it will hardly be pretended that in Italy, or in the south of Europe generally, in those countries still Romanist, where the monk and celibacy yet flourish, the passions are less warm, or the life more pure and chaste, than in those Protestant regions which have a married body of clergy. The direct contrary is a known fact. Enforced celibacy, therefore, is the triumph of sensuality; doing away with it is the rebellion of man's better nature against, and triumph over sensuality. For all supernatural virtue is an ironical term for preternatural vice.

Nor is there any large amount of truth in the more general statement that the Reformation was a movement impelled by the engine of worldly motives. Luther reproached the Papists with "turning the Church of God into a market house, and rendering everything venal, even the forgiveness of sins;" but Popery was unable to return this taunt on one who, like

* "Du refectoire a la cuisine, de la bibliothéque a la salle a manger: c'est leur cuisinière on leur servante qu'ils epousent ordinairement."—II. p. 201.

1521. his colleague Melancthon, had been teaching divinity at Wittenberg for a hundred florins a year. It was no doubt a great auxiliary to the cause of the Reformation that, by half the lands in Germany being the property of the Church, exempt from the taxation which fell on lands in private possession, and by the rapacity as well as other delinquencies of the clergy, as a body, the papal system had become odious to the people, and the man who raised a voice against it was welcomed as a national deliverer. But whatever sway such motives may have exercised with the crowd who thronged round the banner of the Reformation, at least they were extremely subordinate in the mind of him whose hands had lifted it on high. It is a singular feature in Luther's character and writings, how very little the abuses of the ecclesiastical system seem to have moved and influenced him. Even indulgences drew his attention and elicited his censure as trenching upon the ground of scriptural doctrine. His arguments against Romanism were, that she had falsified truth, sealed up Scripture, and substituted for it her own visions and lies. And no defect less vital than this could have justified him in his own eyes in the path which he pursued. No merely human teacher ever more strictly "laid the axe to the *root* of the tree." And when allusions to abuses or to superstitious practices, such as the morals of the Pope, cardinals, and bishops, their luxury and splendour, or the use of rosaries, sprinkling with holy water, &c., occur in his writings, they are generally incidental, and rather employed in the way of *argumentum ad hominem* than as possessing much weight or importance in his own judgment. Up to a certain point the Reformation itself was absolutely Luther. And in fact he and those partisans who formed the centre of the movement were themselves, it must be remembered, of the clerical body, or chiefly so, and therefore, whilst they put their all to hazard, and jeopardised their lives, which some of them were privileged to lose

in the cause they had espoused, they went completely against 1521.
their own worldly interests, for they destroyed with their own hands the harvest of Church wealth in which they might have been sharers.* If, on the other hand, it be conjectured that the desire of notoriety, the ambition of fame, was the inspiring motive of Luther's conduct, this, too, is negatived by his modesty and humility, the honesty and sincerity, the longing for death,† and the real godliness which his familiar correspondence so abundantly discloses, and moreover by the sacrifice of personal glory and popularity to the weal of others, and to truth, which, as these pages will hereafter show, he readily made as soon as ever duty demanded it. But to return to the narrative.

Another innovation followed so quickly upon the abrogation of the vow of celibacy, as to be almost simultaneous with it. Gabriel Zwilling, flattered by the success of his pulpit declamations on one point, turned his eloquence next against the abuse of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in the adoration of the Host, and the administration of one kind only. From this it followed that the votive, private, or corner mass was a gross impiety. Again popular feeling went with him; and so strong a sensation was produced by his words, that the Prior of the Augustines was compelled to discontinue private masses in the convent church. This change was of course reported to Luther, and he gave it his approval, qualified only by the apprehension that in the haste and hurry for change, the conscience might not be sufficiently instructed in the reasons which authorised and demanded it. On all Saints' Day he wrote an address to his Augustine brethren, and accompanied it with a treatise "On the Aboli-

* Thus Bruck writes to the Elector—"If the monks abolish the private mass, they will find the difference in their kitchen and cellar."

† Melancthon writes of him—"Scio quam cupiat ipse dissolvi et esse cum Christo."

1521. tion of the Private Mass," which was printed in the January following.

That the Augustines had removed from them the abuse of the mass, had filled him, he said, with joy; it was proof that the Word of Christ was not idle; but yet his joy was tempered by fear, lest they might not *all* have reached so arduous a decision with equal constancy and a clear conscience. Every one knew the day after day plots of the idolatrous pontiffs and priests of Baal against such as were weak in the faith; how one extolled indulgences, another spread his snares for the consciences of the priests who had married, and in the emulation of wickedness every mind was teeming with some monster. They must be prepared for the most bitter taunts, to be reviled as reckless innovators even by those who were held in estimation for prudence and piety. It was true that blasts would blow and torrents break over them in vain if they were founded on the Rock; but if their foundation was sand, their ruin was imminent. He knew the wrestlings of conscience by his own experience; and it was only with the strongest balm of Gilead, the most plain and incontrovertible texts of Scripture, that he had been able to strengthen his own resolution singly to oppose the Pope, and proclaim him Antichrist, his bishops Antichrist's apostles, his universities brothels, whilst his trembling heart was throbbing, and his perplexity suggesting the inquiry, "Art thou the only wise man?" He thanked God that his faith was now firm and settled, and he could meet the Papist arguments with the triumph of conviction, as the shore laughs at the storm. He was most anxious that the Augustines should be possessed with an equally deep and rooted conviction that in doing what they did they were doing what is right, so as to esteem the judgment of the whole world as but fluttering leaves and straws. It was easy to shut the ears to the voices of the world, but who could shut the ears to the voice of his

own conscience, or to the insinuations of Satan, or the inqui- 1521.
sition of God? Hence the necessity of being sheathed in the armour of God's sure Word, and built upon the Rock.

The Treatise demolished that sacerdotalism which is the corner-stone of Popery, and on which the sacrifice of the mass is based. Quoting all the passages in which the term priest occurs in the New Testament, he showed that in every case it is applied to all and each of Christ's true people. "Come then, you famous priests, produce, I challenge you to it, a single syllable or letter from the Gospels or Epistles to prove that your order is a separate priesthood from the common priesthood of Christians. And the pretence of a peculiar priesthood being totally unscriptural, it follows that the laws of the Pope are nothing but figments, the papal priesthood a mere mask and idol, and the so-called sacrifice of the mass the climax of idolatrous impiety. Christ is the only sacrificing priest of Christians. He has made one sacrifice once for all, of which the mass is a commemoration." He dwelt upon his favourite passage in 1 Cor. xiv. in demonstration that the right of prophecying or teaching originally belonged to every Christian—"Ye may all prophecy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." He continued, "Behemoth and his spawn may burst to learn that Christ gave the right of teaching and judging to *all* Christians, and did not set up one little Lucifer to tower over the rest. The mass-mongering papistical priesthood is Satan's handiwork." Proceeding in this strain, he instituted a comparison between Christ's bishops, "married laymen of good report," and the Pope's bishops and priests, "with their razored heads, oily fingers, and pharisaical vestments." And he concluded with what he styled "an allegory of the synagogue," viz. that the priests of Bethaven, who waited on the worship of the golden calf, were to the Jewish what the Papacy is to the Christian Church.

1521. At the end of this Treatise he resumed his address to his Augustine brethren of Wittenberg—"You, too, have got a Bethaven, that Church of All Saints, which the Elector Frederic has received by inheritance, and by Papist deceit has magnificently adorned. How many poor might have been relieved at the price of such costliness! How many friends might he have made to himself with the mammon of unrighteousness, to welcome him into everlasting dwellings! But it is much to be feared that the wealth of princes is seldom worthy to be put to a pious use, for it is generally acquired after the example of Nimrod. But, by the grace of God, we may indulge a pride that our Elector is by no means tyrannical, foolish, hasty, or severe, but a great lover of truth, calm in his judgments, an object of terror to the bad and of respect to the good. Finish what you have begun. By such opportunities God invites you, and stretches out his hand."*

Luther underwent many dark struggles of spiritual conflict by reason of his repudiating the private mass: his settled conviction on the subject was turned into a weapon against him by the devil, to drive him to despair. One night, he recounts that he awoke about midnight, and saw Satan standing by his bedside. "Listen, Luther, learned, thrice learned Doctor," the fiend said to him; "for fifteen years you have celebrated private mass: what if the private mass turns out now to be idolatry, and what you adored to be simply bread and wine?" Luther answered, "I am an anointed priest, anointed and consecrated by a bishop, and I acted in obedience to my superiors in all that I did; I pronounced the words of Christ with seriousness, and with all the seriousness of my soul celebrated the mass. Thou knowest it well." "Yes," replied Satan; "but then you had no true faith or

* Luther mentions the same grievance, the Bethaven of All Saints' Church, in a letter to Spalatin.

knowledge of Christ: you were no better than the Turks, or 1521.
than we devils, who believe the history of Christ, but have him not as a Mediator and Saviour, but only as an angry Judge. So you deemed Christ an angry Judge; you flew to Mary and the Saints, and prayed them to mediate for you. You robbed Christ of the glory due to him, and sacrificed the mass as a Gentile or heathen. It was therefore no mass at all, for there was no consecrating power present, that is, no Christian faith. Again, you disobeyed the institution of Christ, and did not distribute of the elements to others, but ate and drank alone. What sort of sacrament or communion is this? Christ knows nothing of it. You never once confessed Christ in the mass, as he enjoined, but muttered some words in a whisper to yourself. And you were ordained, contrary to the will of Christ, not to communicate the Sacrament to others, but to sacrifice for the quick and dead. What ordination is that? Or what kind of mass did you celebrate? What kind of baptism would it be, if one baptized himself? or confirmation, to confirm one's self? or ordination, absolution, unction, or marriage, to ordain, absolve, anoint, or marry one's self. These are your seven sacraments. How could you perform the communion for yourself alone, any more than any other of the sacraments? Christ himself did not take his sacrament himself alone; he distributed of it to his apostles. What sort of a minister have you been?" "But I sacrificed," Luther replied, re-grasping, as before, the old weapons which he had used as a Papist, "in the faith of the Church, according to the intention of the Church; if I did not believe aright, yet at least the Church did." "Where," Satan loudly rejoined to this reply, "where is the text of Scripture which states that an impious and unbelieving man can stand by Christ's altar and sacrifice in the faith of the Church? How could the Church give you her intention?

1521. And what is the intention of the Church but that of Christ, which is only to be learnt from his Word? What, then, is that intention which is contrary to Christ's Word? Blasphemous man! in the private mass you contradicted the clear words of Christ. Ordination for such a purpose is no better than the baptism of a stone, or of a bell. You did not celebrate the sacrament at all, but turned it into a source of gain in blasphemy of Christ, serving not him but your own belly." After these words, with a ghastly laugh the tempter vanished. But it can hardly be supposed that Luther intended that this apparition of, and colloquy with Satan, should be understood literally; it is far more probable that in representing how the evil spirit can and often does employ the conviction of truth to produce despair, he gives to the voice within, suggested by the devil, an outward existence, as if Satan in visible shape had uttered it.*

How was the Elector of Saxony engaged whilst this religious and social revolution was progressing with such rapid strides in his dominions? Audin says† that he was walking in his pleasure grounds at Lochau with Horace or Juvenal in his hand. But the season of the year (October) would hardly suit such open-air studies; and if it is necessary to fill up the gaps in history by the aid of the imagination, a picture nearer the truth would be, that of the aged and infirm Frederic seated in his easy chair, with Spalatin at his elbow, listening to his secretary as he read to him a letter lately received from Luther, or a portion of the book of God, or consoled him under the trials of age, infirmity, and public

* The account of the colloquy with Satan did not appear in any earlier edition of the work than that of 1533. A barefooted monk, Caspar Schatzgeyer, opposed Luther's conclusions on the mass and the monastic vow; but was quickly silenced.

† Histoire de Luther, II. p. 193.

troubles with some passages from the Tessaradecas. Frederic's 1521.
mind was made up as to the line of conduct which he should pursue; and without abandoning the caution and prudence of his character, he was resolved to take truth as his pole-star. "The straight line is always the shortest road," was his motto. How he acted in reference to the case of Feldkirchen has been already seen. And when the question of the private mass was thus prominently brought into discussion, his first efforts were directed to ascertaining the sense of Scripture upon the subject. He appointed delegates from the university, Jonas, Carlstadt, Melancthon, Platner, Amsdorf, Doltz, and Jerome Schurf, to hold a conference with the Augustine fraternity; and the delegates discussed with them for two days their reasons for the abolition of the private mass, and received at their hands a written statement in justification of their proceedings. And the delegates made a report to Frederic in approval of the sentiments of the Augustines on all points save the rather material one of the private and sole communion of one person, which was not so certainly objectionable in the opinion of the delegates as in that of the fraternity.* In other respects they adopted exactly the views of Luther, that to call the mass "a good work and a sacrifice," is to obscure the essential doctrine of the Gospel—justification through Christ by faith alone; and they implored the Elector so to act, that at the day of judgment the reproach which had fallen on Capernaum might not be applied to him, that Christ's ineffable goodness had been vouchsafed in vain. But besides the difference between the

* The Augustines said "Nec unquam unus privatim seipsum communicasse legitur"—of which the delegates observed, "Quod autem inter reliqua et hanc causam sui facte exponunt neminem privatim et solum debere communicare, ea nobis quidem non satis firma videtur." —Lat. Op. Jenæ, II. pp. 472, 473; and Walch. XV. p. 2342.

1521. fraternity and the delegates on one material point, a further difficulty was occasioned by the University as a body hesitating to sanction the report of the delegates. The Elector therefore replied, that on a matter of so much moment, no determination must be formed hastily; that if the Gospel was clear on the subject, a more general consent would soon be arrived at: he begged to be informed when the abuse of the mass originated, and the apostolical usage ceased, and demanded what was to become of the endowments of chantries if votive masses were done away with, and finally required that order and tranquillity should be rigorously maintained by all means.* The delegates replied that the ancient colleges and monasteries had served as schools for the education of Christian youth up to the age not only of Augustine but of Bernard: that the foundation only of the more recent convents, which did not date farther back than 450 years, was in connexion with the mass: that the administration in both kinds had continued unimpaired without question to the time of Cyprian, and remained so still in the Eastern Church to the present day: that the mass-book used by the Bishop of Milan was without many of the additions to be found in the Roman mass-book; and that to offer the sacramental bread as a sacrifice for the quick and the dead was blasphemy and in the teeth of the express words of Christ. But as the University declined to co-operate with the delegates, Frederic preferred to leave the question undecided by any authoritative settlement on his part for the present.

In the midst of his controversial labours and spiritual disquietudes, the resentment of the Reformer in the Wartburg was aroused to a towering height, by an unexpected piece of intelligence forwarded to him, that the Archbishop of Mentz

* See his Instruction, Bretsch. I. p. 471.

had re-established the indulgence traffic at Halle. It was 1521.
reported that he spoke of Luther as "the excommunicated monk safe under bolts and bars." Luther had been very indignant with the Archbishop before, on account of his severe and cruel treatment of a married priest; and this new intelligence made the fire of his wrath flame with tenfold violence. In this frame of mind Luther composed a treatise "Against the Idol Worship at Halle." But his intended publication quickly got wind, and the Archbishop despatched Capito and Auerback (*i.e.* Stromer) to Wittenberg, to use their influence with the Lutheran Professors to restrain Dr. Martin's impetuosity, and prevent the step which he had been informed he was on the point of taking. They visited Jonas and Melancthon, and, as though incidentally, recommended that Luther should spare the Archbishop.* Their embassy, however, was ineffectual at Wittenberg; but they next essayed Frederic, and represented in lively colours the great evils of a breach of peace, which Luther's violence must without fail occasion. Frederic was so much moved that he assured the Archbishop's delegates that he would not permit the publication of the treatise. The Edict of Worms dwelt in his memory. And Spalatin was directed to convey to the Reformer the electoral prohibition of his intended publication against the Archbishop of Mentz. To this prohibition Luther replied, in very decided terms, in a letter to Spalatin of the 11th or 12th November: "I scarce ever read a less welcome letter than your last, so that I have not only postponed my reply, but had determined to send no reply at all. First, I will never endure that our Prince will not suffer me to write against the Archbishop of Mentz, and disturb the public peace. Rather I will destroy you, and our Prince, and every

* See Melancthon's account, Bret. I. p. 463.

1521. creature. If I resisted the Pope, the creator, why am I to bow before his creature? It is a fine excuse, forsooth, that the public peace must not be disturbed, when God's eternal peace is broken by such impious and sacrilegious doings of perdition. Not so, Spalatin! not so, my Prince! For the sheep of Christ I will resist with all my might that fell wolf, and make him an example to others. I send the book which I had already composed against him when your letter came, which has not induced me to change a single syllable: but I had intended to submit it to the judgment of Philip, to let him make any alteration that he might think fit. Beware of not forwarding the book to him. My determination is fixed." *

It was not long after this that Luther paid his secret visit to Wittenberg, and there arranged, amongst other matters, what part he should act towards the Archbishop. On his return to the Wartburg he wrote a letter to him on the 1st December, threatening to publish the treatise already composed "Against the Idol at Halle," unless within fourteen days he received a satisfactory answer from his Grace. He reminded the Archbishop that he had twice before addressed him, but in vain: he now addressed him once more, and would write in German. He had himself before undertaken his Grace's defence, and urged that the teaching of the indulgence commissaries must be without his knowledge: but the Archbishop was now declaring to the whole world that by his own spontaneous choice he oppressed and robbed the poor folk. A little spark oft grew to a mighty fire. Every one had thought that the poor monk must fall before the power of the Pope. God, however, had ordained otherwise. And the same God still lived, whose delight it was to break the cedars, and abase the haughty Pharaohs. If the idol was not immedi-

* De Wette, II. p. 94.

ately removed, divine truth would compel him to treat the 1521.
Archbishop as he had treated the Pontiff, to render him as infamous as he had rendered Tetzel, and to demonstrate to all the world the distinction between a bishop and a wolf. "His Grace must, moreover, leave the married priests in peace; or else a voice would cry from the Gospel, 'Let the bishops first pull the beam out of their own eye,' let them put away their whores, before they call on honest men to put away their lawful wives." *

The most remarkable incident in the story is, that, before the fourteen days had elapsed, an answer arrived from the Archbishop in the following terms:—

"Dear Doctor,

"I have received your letter, dated St. Catherine's Day, with all good will and favour; but the matter to which you refer has been remedied long since. It is my wish to be a good Bishop and a good Christian Prince, so far as God's grace, strength, and wisdom may be granted me; and for this I will truly pray and implore others to pray also. I know that I can do nothing of myself, but stand in need of God's grace; for I am a sinful man, subject to daily errors and transgressions. There is no good in me without the grace of God; and I am a stinking dunghill in myself, as much as others, if not more so. I have not wished to conceal from you my good inclinations towards you, for I am more than willing to show you grace and favour for Christ's sake. Brotherly and christian rebuke I can well bear. I hope the merciful and good God will extend to me more grace, strength, and patience in this and in other things, to live according to his will.

"Albert,

"With his own hand." †

* De Wette, II. p. 112.

† Walch. XIX. p. 661.

1521. This singular letter was accompanied by an epistle from the Archbishop's temporising chaplain, Capito, informing Luther that the Archbishop had replied in a mild strain by his advice, and recommending gentle handling of the sins and infirmities of persons in high station, in order to promote the progress of the Gospel. Luther left the Archbishop's letter unanswered, and replied to the chaplain—"The view you take is downright hypocrisy and a denial of Christian truth. What connexion is there between a Christian and a flatterer? Christianity is the most open and honest-dealing thing in the world. I suspect that you have shaped your Cardinal into an egregious hypocrite. If he is sincere in his professions, let him resign his cardinal's mask and his episcopal pomp, and gird himself to the ministry of the Word. You tell me that the married priest, of whom I made mention, is now released from imprisonment. Released, indeed! You made him first forswear his wife against his conscience! and your Cardinal writes that that matter which I complained of has been long since remedied. Are you tempting the Holy Ghost? Inform your Cardinal of my sentiments. I know not whether I ought to praise his sincerity or reprobate his hypocrisy. If I thought him sincere, O! how gladly would I throw myself at his feet."* Thus the matter remained in abeyance: the Treatise, indeed, had found a deadlock in Spalatin's custody for the present; but it was afterwards published.

As the duration of his solitude lengthened, Luther turned a more longing eye towards Wittenberg. There was much doing in his cherished town and University: every week was marked by some fresh conversion, or some new step in the opposite direction to Rome; and the ire and insults of the Papists were redoubled on each successive move in the pro-

* De Wette, II. pp. 129—134.

gress of the evangelical tenets. With a view to comfort his 1521.
townspeople under the calumnious imputations which their abolition of the most obnoxious usages of Rome drew upon them, he addressed to them an exposition of the 36th Psalm, and accompanied it with a letter, which ran in the highest strain of religious confidence. "I have appeared," he said, "before the Papists three several times, at Augsburg, at Leipsic, and at Worms; but they have been always afraid to show their faces at Wittenberg, and try their arguments by the test of a public disputation. They tremble at the light as the evil spirit at the name of the judgment day. Let them bleed themselves dry with slandering us. We have the Scriptures: they have not; we stand in the plain: they sneak into corners like mice."* At last, his desire to see Wittenberg again, and to learn whether the reports which reached him stated the truth, grew too strong to be repressed; and under the effectual disguise of his knightly character, and the conduct of his faithful attendant, about the end of November, as has been mentioned, he passed unobserved through the streets, and halted at the door of Amsdorf's house. His most intimate friends were privately apprised of his presence; and soon a group of Professors surrounded the strange-looking knight with the long beard. In such society once more met together, the moments passed winged with delight. All that he heard received his approval, and drew forth warm expressions of gratitude to God; the only drawback was, that when he mentioned his recent treatises, his friends were found to be quite in the dark respecting them; Spalatin, in fact, had continued the policy against which Luther had before so warmly remonstrated, and suppressed them. Seizing a pen, he wrote immediately to the

* De Wette, II. p. 63.

1521. Elector's secretary:—"Amidst the endearments of my friends I have not been spared some admixture of wormwood. It is of no use for you to row against the tide. If my writings cannot be printed at Wittenberg, I will have them printed elsewhere. And if the copies have been lost, or you have retained them, be assured that my spirit will become so embittered, that I shall handle the same subjects with far greater vehemence hereafter. All that I see and hear rejoices me. May the Lord comfort the hearts of those who wish well; although upon my road I was so vexed with rumours of agitations and commotions, that I have resolved to compose a public exhortation to peace and quiet immediately on my return to my wilderness. Do not let the Elector know of my visit, for reasons which you are aware of.

"Given in Philip's company at Amsdorff's house."

The postscript to this letter mentions a Latin Bible, in the possession of Spalatin, which Luther requested might be sent to him; and in the next letter addressed to Spalatin after his return to the Wartburg, mention is made of a Greek Testament, which he desired to have forwarded to Philip, to be despatched to him with some other books. From these directions, added to the fact, that previously to this visit no allusion appears in his correspondence to his translation of the New Testament, and that subsequently its progress is a frequent theme of remark, it is probable that his intention in this respect was formed or matured at this Wittenberg meeting. During the remainder of his stay in the old fortress, his time was engrossed with the mighty work of translating the whole of the Greek New Testament, which has shed such glory around his own name, and the tower itself, and the room in which it was achieved. His lute, which had before beguiled many a wearisome hour, was laid aside; his rides were discontinued; the rafters and walls of his captivity no longer echoed with his peals of laugh-

ter; the New Testament was constantly in his hands, or 1521.
before his eyes; and within three months the Greek original had been converted into noble German. But before he commenced the task, he performed his promise, and composed a popular exhortation to peace and quiet, and transmitted it to Spalatin in the beginning of December.

The translation of the books of the New Testament into German was imperatively required, not only in completion of what had been begun, and as a palladium of its continuance, but as a barrier against those excesses and extravagances, to which the human mind in an unsettled and excited frame is peculiarly liable, and which had been anticipated by Luther's foresight, as blots with which Satan would seek to mar the work of God in the Reformation. In fact, the disease broke out before the antidote had been provided. On the 3rd December, just when the celebration of the mass was commencing in Wittenberg parish church, some students and burghers, who had mustered for the purpose, rushed towards the altar with knives in their hands, drove the priests from their places, and carried off the mass books. The town council, however, seemed resolved to check the first outbreak of riot, and summoned those implicated in this rude and violent disturbance of public worship, to appear at their bar, and had them apprehended: but upon this the townspeople rose *en masse*, demanded the liberation of the prisoners, and threatened open insurrection if their demand was not conceded. The town council gave way.

This success of the popular cause encouraged the prime movers in the agitation to proceed with vigour in the path of religious change. Carlstadt had come prominently forward in objecting to clerical and monastic celibacy; and had openly declared against the private mass, the administration of the Sacrament in one kind, and the adoration of the Host. He

1521. was a man of a peculiar character, a type of the German mind, in its restless, less sound, and sceptical phase. He united the curiosity of intellectual speculation with the personal ambition to occupy the sphere of a shining light in the Church. He had been diverted from scholasticism to attention to the Sacred Writings, by the influence and example of Luther; but his diligence had not been sufficiently persevering to enable him to acquire a thorough acquaintance with the ancient languages in which the Scriptures were originally given to mankind. But his thoughts had early been directed to such enquiries, as, whether the five books generally attributed to Moses were really the productions of that lawgiver; and whether the four Gospels had come down to mankind in the form in which they were at first composed. Luther's absence had raised the Archdeacon of Wittenberg higher on the stage of public notice; and resolving not to fall below the expectations which had been formed of him, the little sallow, tawny man, whose eloquence had never been remarkable, proceeded to discourse to crowds, of the sublimities of theology, in a mysterious and inflated language, which, for the very reason that it was not easy of comprehension, seemed to envelope a hidden and rare wisdom. As early as October Carlstadt administered the Lord's Supper, in conformity with the institution of Christ, to twelve private friends. But on the Sunday before Christmas Day, he announced publicly from the pulpit that on New Year's Day he should administer the Sacrament in the parish church, divested of all those corruptions in doctrine, language, and ceremonial, with which the Papacy had encumbered a simple commemorative rite. There were, however, reasons for suspecting that his intention would be frustrated by measures to be adopted by the Court, if he waited for the appointed day; and therefore he forestalled this presumed antagonism, and on Christmas Day seized the oppor-

tunity of solemnising the Lord's Supper in public, according 1521.
to the primitive mode. He admitted to the communion such as had only confessed generally in the prayers of the Church, as well as those who had attended auricular confession, absolving them in the words, "Sin no more." He distributed both the bread and the wine to the communicants, repeating as he did so some words in German: and, at the conclusion, the Agnus Dei was sung. Upon New Year's Day he again 1522.
administered the Lord's Supper in the same manner, and continued so to do, without meeting with any opposition from the Saxon Court, beyond a verbal and personal rebuke from one of the courtiers. Popular opinion was energetically on his side: and in January the town council issued their order that the celebration of the Sacrament should uniformly be conducted according to the revived custom of the primitive age.

As yet, however, no rupture between Luther and Carlstadt had taken place. Audin would indeed imply that the Archdeacon's vanity had been wounded by Luther's rejection of his reasons for abolishing the monastic vow.* "The Homeric laugh," he says, of the recluse in the Wartburg, "sounded as far as Wittenberg." But this does not appear correct. Luther had not publicly avowed any difference from Carlstadt's views: he had written his own reasons, which, although varying from the Archdeacon's, arrived at the same conclusion; and in his correspondence with Melancthon, he spoke generally of Carlstadt's treatises as "neither deficient in genius nor in erudition, but wanting clearness."† "His endea-

* Carlstadt, in his work, "De Cælibatu Monachatu et Viduitate," cited as a reason the prohibition, Levit. xviii. 21, "Ne quis immolet semen Moloch." Luther observed to Melancthon privately, that such reasoning would make them a laughing-stock to the Papists. See De Wette, II. p. 37.

† "Utinam Carlstadii scripta plus lucis haberent, cum et ingenii et eruditionis magna vis in eis est."—De Wette, II. p. 40.

1522. vours and industry," he says in another place, "are greatly to be approved." He still called him "the excellent Carlstadt." Early in January the Archdeacon married Anne Mochau, a spinster, of a house ranking among the nobility; a special service beginning with, "God declared, It is not good for man to be alone," had been framed for the occasion; and Luther sent his congratulations, and promised to bring his bridal gift himself in person, when he should return to Wittenberg. It does indeed appear from a passage in one of the Reformer's letters, that the precipitancy of the Archdeacon's conduct was regretted by Luther: but the words are gentle, and betoken regard: "I am pained about Carlstadt." *

But Carlstadt's views and behaviour ere long became more widely divergent from the line of prudence, and ran deeper into the mazes of speculation. Luther's teaching had elevated the Scriptures to their rightful supremacy as the exclusive standard for doctrine and practice; and he had denied the right of any individual Doctor or Father of the Church, however learned or holy, and of the Society of Christians generally, as represented by an Œcumenical Council, to interpret Scripture authoritatively. Each one must live and die for himself, stand before God's judgment-seat himself alone, and answer for his own thoughts, words, and actions. Each one must, therefore, read, study, and believe God's book for himself. Such was his teaching. The Roman system had feigned a spiritual partnership among Christians, whereby the prayers of the priest could be a substitute for those of the congregation; the Bible be a priest's book, not the people's book; its truths be proclaimed or reserved, garbled or exaggerated, as the priests might please; the good works of the Saints, over and above what they had need of for themselves,

* Dolco de Carlstadio.

be transferred to the tattered or bare shoulders of less meri- 1522.
torious members of the religious community, the bonds of which remained undissolved by death, for even beyond that gulf masses and prayers could liberate the soul from misery. Such a religion, however poetical and even sublime in theory, with its high priest, the centre of the system, the Supreme Pontiff, holding the keys of destiny, and unlocking the gates of heaven to let the members of the Church militant on earth pass to the Church triumphant above, terminated practically, by a fatal necessity, in gross superstition, a lucrative priest-craft, and the substitution with the multitude of form and ceremony for vital and personal godliness. In overthrowing this flattering but fallacious notion of a joint-stock company in spiritualities, and laying the stress where the Scriptures lay it, on individual faith, charity, and holiness, Luther seized on the only means of refining religion from its dregs by introducing true and worthy ideas of the Church, as the communion of individual saints. But it is easy to see that this principle of individuality, like all truth, is liable to perversion and abuse. And this now proved the case in Germany. There arose a sect of fanatics, who laid claim to immediate inspiration from God, and urged that the Scriptures and every species of learning were useless, because they were themselves a Bible to themselves, they held communion with Jehovah, and were divinely illuminated in all things. Thus Luther, as he had already combated Romanism, was next called upon to combat one of the most seductive forms of Rationalism. And these new sectaries, although apparently at the opposite pole to Popery, in reality approached very near to it; for, like Popery, they discarded Scripture, substituting for it individual reason, or individual phantasies, as Popery substituted for it the reason of the so-called Church, or the reason of one assumed infallible man, the Pope. Luther declared for God,

1522. not man: man to be conformed to God's will, as made known in his Word; Popery and Rationalism declared for man, not God—God's Word to be shaped and coloured, shortened or lengthened, according to human predilections, to be sealed up under the keys of the Church, or superseded by the plenary light of individual intuition.

This new fanaticism, or rather this old fanaticism newly revived, took its rise at Zwickau. No town had welcomed the evangelical tenets with greater zeal.* Frederic Myconius, or Mecum, a Reformer before the Reformation, who had been taught the doctrine of justification through Christ alone by faith, from childhood, by a father who Melchior Adam supposes may have been one of the Waldenses, and who had looked forth from his Franciscan convent at Annaberg with joy, when Luther's Theses appeared, to see that Sun beginning to shine upon the world which had long been shining upon his own heart, had proclaimed the Gospel there. He had removed to another sphere; but Nicholas Hausmann, the present pastor of Zwickau, was so eminent for his exemplary life, even among the earliest adherents of the Reformation, as to be distinguished by Luther himself with the eulogy, "*He* lives as we preach." But the fervour of religious zeal easily becomes extravagance in some minds, or is readily converted by designing men into an instrument for promoting their selfish schemes. Nicholas Stork, a weaver of Zwickau, seems to have been the first to promulge there the fanatical notions of immediate inspiration superseding the use of all subordinate means. He was soon joined by Mark Thomas, also a weaver of Zwickau, by Mark Stubner, who had been a student of Wittenberg, and by Thomas Munzer, pastor of Alstedt. Not

* Ranke says, that Peter of Dresden, who, with Nicolas, being banished by the Bishop of Misnia, had taken refuge in Prague, had sojourned at Zwickau a long time.—Deutsche Geschichte, II. p. 16.

satisfied with rejecting the Bible as unnecessary under the 1522.
light which they enjoyed by direct contact with the Divine Being, they represented it as a servile book, ministering only to sin and wrath; they depreciated learning as a hinderance to communion with the invisible world; and predicted the overthrow of the existing state of society, and the destruction of the civil power, to make way for the reign of the Saints. The Archangel Gabriel, Stork affirmed, had appeared to him in a vision, and said, "Thou shalt sit on my throne." As to their other opinions, they determined that an infant could not have faith; and, faith being essential to the validity of a Sacrament, they required of those who espoused their doctrines to be rebaptized. And hence the name which the sect afterwards acquired of the "Anabaptists." In imitation of Christ they chose from among their number twelve men whom they called apostles; and seventy whom they placed in the subordinate rank of disciples. Great crowds of the lower orders and some of the class of tradespeople eagerly attached themselves to these opinions. But Hausmann energetically opposed such fanatical principles. And when the ardour of the new sect was beginning to display itself in commotion and tumult, the magistrates resolved to repress their seditious doctrines, and with a view to that end to prevent their meetings by the arm of authority. The fanatics persisted in holding their meetings, and were collecting weapons for self-defence, when the chief magistrate of the town, anticipating their intention of resorting to force, had the most factious of their party arrested. Upon this the rest abandoned Zwickau, and dispersed in various directions. Some turned their steps to Prague, where they hoped to make converts; but Stork, Stubner, and Thomas took the road to Wittenberg, where the agitated condition of the public mind seemed to promise a harvest for their enthusiastic and self-conceited dogmas. And

1522. here they presently allied themselves with Carlstadt, whose notions upon Scripture were already in some measure in harmony with their own.

Melancthon found himself unequal to a contest with these visionary sectaries, and wrote to the Elector that the man to pass sentence on their tenets and to confront them personally was "Dr. Martin;"* and glad enough was he even of this reason for Luther's return, for in all his letters to Spalatin he had never failed to reiterate, "Send us back our Elias." Their other opinions did not move Melancthon; but they stated their objections to infant baptism, and with all his learning he was perplexed for an answer; and according to his custom referred his difficulties for solution to the captive in the Wartburg. Carlstadt, on the contrary, was not misled by their Anabaptist novelties; but he yielded to their vehement invectives against learning, closed his books, and recommended others to do the same; and ceasing altogether the study of Scripture, in which his assiduity had often flagged, passed from the workshop of the artisan to the tradesman's counter, to hear divine truths from the lips of babes in worldly knowledge, but preternaturally taught of heaven. The new sect declared their enthusiastic doctrines in their mystic language, to an audience in exactly that stage of mental and religious excitement when visionary ideas of immediate access to the invisible world are the most captivating; and it was impossible to foresee what influence they might acquire, how far and how deep their principles might fix their roots, and whether the triumph of the celestial prophets might not extend to the overthrow of the civil institutions of society, of all learning, and of civilization itself. It was certainly an auxiliary of some account towards effecting the popular delusion, that the

* See Melancthon's letter, Walch. XV. p. 2367. Bret. II. p. 534.

inspired of God held in the main the evangelical doctrines 1522.
which Luther had impressed on the students and townspeople of Wittenberg. Mark Stubner, the only man of letters among the prophets, was admitted by Melancthon to lodge in his house,* either from the extreme benevolence of Philip's character, or his desire to become well acquainted with the Zwickau creed. Several of Melancthon's pupils became converts to opinions discrediting all learning, human or divine, save what was immediately imparted by God himself. Martin Mohr or Cellarius, the Rector of the Grammar School, called upon the citizens, from the windows of the school-house, to take away their children, and instead of seeking book-learning for them, to apprentice them to learn some useful trade or handicraft. Another schoolmaster, Neber Enders, also resigned his school, and turned to day labour as a peasant.† And several of the University students, acting by the guidance of the new lights, transferred their attention from literary study to the acquisition of some mechanical art.

In this medley of notions and pursuits the Elector of Saxony himself, warmly as he loved peace, and fondly as he cherished his University, was not without bewildering perplexities how he ought to act. He received from his councillors and from learned men an account of the tenets of the Zwickau prophets; and he sent for Melancthon and Amsdorf to Prettin, and conversed with them on the subject; but he hesitated to adopt the same measures which the magistrates of Zwickau had used; for he thought with himself, "What if

* A conversation between Melancthon and Stubner has been preserved. "What," said Stubner, "is your opinion of John Chrysostom?" "I value his writings highly," Melancthon replied, "although I regret their verbosity." "I saw him," Stubner resumed, "in Purgatory, and his face was very sorrowful."—Camerar. p. 50.

† Mathes. p. 62.

1522. their teaching should after all be true!" "I am a layman, and do not understand theology," he told Melancthon and Amsdorf, "but I had rather take my staff in my hand and quit my country than resist God!" * In this dilemma he at length determined to pursue the course which he had usually found the most prudent, to leave the question to unravel itself by the course of events. But not so the majority as well as the more sensible of the citizens and students. Their cry and prayer was for Luther's return. Earnest letters were addressed to him, entreating that he would comply with the general wish. Even the inspired saints themselves appealed to him to endorse their sentiments. And it was evident to most persons of sound sense that if the vessel of the Reformation was to be saved from total shipwreck, the firm and skilful pilot must once more be at the helm.

Carlstadt was bent on finding his own advantage in his alliance with the Zwickau prophets; and having reached a more commanding influence by their support, hastened to carry into execution his unripe projects for a more thorough Reformation. As if he knew that his opportunity would not last long, every day witnessed the downfall of some portion of the old ecclesiastical system. Auricular confession was abolished; the attire of the priest was thrown aside, and a layman's garb assumed in its place. Antipapal zeal made a display of eating eggs and meat on Wednesdays and Fridays. With puritanical ardour the church walls were stripped of the pictures which had adorned them; candles, crucifixes, and the various decorations of the shrines of saints strewed the pavement. Carlstadt's discourses had been particularly directed against the idolatry of image-worship; and a resolution had

* "Ehe wollte ich einen stab in meine hand nehmen und davon gehen."—Walch. XV. p. 2368.

been made and notified by the civil authorities, for the re- 1522.
moval of all incentives to this impiety; but, as its execution seemed tardy, the Archdeacon incited the multitude to free the sacred edifices from the desecration of these "painted gods, idol logs," with their own hands. The churches were tumultuously entered, the images torn down; heads, hands, and limbs were broken, or chopped off, and the fragments left on the floor, or thrown into the streets, or consumed by fire amidst shouts of exultation. The citizens were then moved to petition the town council for the entire abrogation by formal order of masses, vigils, processions, and all useless ceremonies, which, under apprehension of more destructive riot, was conceded. The utmost liberty of preaching was granted to the Zwickau prophets, by whose aid these precipitate measures had been successfully accomplished: and matters were so rapidly maturing, that the project for organizing at Wittenberg a Christian society on the Zwickau principles, composed of none but saints exempt from error by divine illumination, was a principal topic of discussion.

All this while Luther was prosecuting his translation of the New Testament. His sense of the importance, or rather necessity of this work, is thus expressed in a letter of the 18th December, to his old friend John Lange, who had himself previously, of his own independent thought, entered on the same task. "The Germans demand it. I hear that you are labouring in the same thing; go on as you have begun. I would fain that every town in Germany should have its own translator, and that the book of books should be in every tongue, in every hand, before every eye, in every ear, and in every heart." But Luther found time to continue the Postils; although the difficulties which he had to overcome in rendering the New Testament, for the first time, from the original Greek into a modern language, proved far

1522. more onerous than he had at all anticipated. It was, he said, a work beyond his strength; and he expressed a wish, in letters, both to Melancthon and Amsdorf, of the same day,* that an apartment might be provided for him in some friend's house, or a lodging be procured to which he might repair, to avail himself of learned assistance. His plan had at first embraced the translation of the Old Testament from the Hebrew, as well as of the New from the Greek: but he now determined not to attempt the Old Testament, until he enjoyed the presence and co-operation of his friends.† And the disturbances at Wittenberg shortly afterwards assuming more alarming features, as has been related, which proved the necessity of his speedy return in his proper character, made him, without question, expedite the translation of the New Testament at the closing period of his seclusion, with all the despatch of incredible industry, joined to the highest native powers.

The Postils were advancing, the translation of the New Testament rapidly progressing, and yet Luther found spare time for epistolary correspondence, to solve questions in theology proposed by his friends, and to communicate his counsel in the trying emergencies of the Reformation. Amsdorf enquired his opinion on the subject of Purgatory. He stated in reply his belief, that it was rather a state than a place, "a taste of hell, such as Christ, Moses, Abraham, David, Jacob, Job, Hezekiah, and many other Scriptural characters endured," and still Purgatory, whether undergone in the body or out of the body. Of the soul in its intermediate state before reunion with the body, he held the opinion, that except in a few instances it remained in a dormant condition,

* January 13.

† Vetus Testamentum non potero attingere, nisi, &c.—De Wette II. p. 123.

but yet so, that there might be a dreamy foretaste of the joys 1522.
of heaven, or of the torments of hell. To Melancthon, he answered the objection against infant baptism, that infants were incapable of faith, by denying such an assumption altogether. "Let them prove first what they advance, without the least warrant of truth, that infants *are* incapable of faith." The baptism of infants, he urged, had from the Apostolic age to the present been the invariable custom of the Church: and, although he had expected that "Satan would one day touch this sore," the evil spirit had not done so under the Papacy, but had reserved such a dreadful wound for the era of the Reformation. No single truth of God had ever been left without its witness among men: and, therefore, it followed incontestably, that the Anabaptist doctrine, unheard of until broached by the Zwickau fanatics, was destitute of all foundation. Circumcision among the Jews was of equal virtue with baptism among Christians; yet it had been ordained of God that that sign of faith should be marked upon infants: and this simple difference, that a specific time, the eighth day from the birth, was appointed the Jews, whereas no particular period was set apart for baptism, only evinced the greater liberty which characterised the Christian dispensation. Even were infants incapable of faith, which was untrue, yet the faith of the parents might suffice to warrant the admission of their children to the baptismal covenant; or else what did the Apostle mean by saying, "Otherwise were your children unclean, but now are they holy."

From the very first Luther saw through the delusion of immediate inspiration, and the pretence of sensible colloquies with the Divine Being. And it raised his astonishment that Philip, so much his superior in attainments, should be staggered for an instant by the Anabaptist sophistries of the self-styled prophets, or be at any loss how to deal with their

1522. presumptuous claims. "Try them," he wrote, "by such Scriptures as Deut. xiii. and 1 John iv. Their story upon its face is extremely suspicious, for they talk of divine colloquies. Enquire whether they have experienced that spiritual anguish, those divine births—death and hell. If you hear of nothing but blandness, tranquillity, devotion, and piety, even if they should speak of being carried to the third heaven, believe them not; because the sign of the Son of Man is wanting, which is the test, the sole touchstone of Christians, and the sure discerner of the spirits. Would you know the place, the time, the mode of divine colloquies? Listen—'Like as a lion he hath broken all my bones—I am cast away from the sight of thine eyes—My soul is filled with trouble, and my life draweth nigh unto hell.' The Divine Majesty doth not so speak that man may behold him, for 'There shall no flesh see me and live.' Nature cannot endure a scintillation of his voice. And, therefore, he speaks by the agency of man, because we could not bear it if he spoke himself. The Virgin was affrighted when she saw the angel. So was Daniel. And Jeremiah complains, 'Bring me into judgment with thee; be not a terror unto me.' Need I add more? As if the Divine Majesty could speak with the old man, and not first slay and turn him to dust, that his foul stench might not arise, because God is 'a consuming fire.' Even the dreams and visions of the Saints are terrible when sleep has departed. Use these tests: and never hear of Jesus in glory, until you have first beheld Jesus on the cross."

He had before resolved to return to Wittenberg after Easter; but the commotions which had arisen, or were threatening to arise, induced him to fix his return for the beginning of Lent. The tumultuous exit of the monks from many convents, as from that at Erfurth, which he made a matter of complaint to John Lange, and the agitation of the public mind generally,

warned him not to delay in his retreat longer than the great 1522.
work he was engaged in imperatively required. Above all, the fanaticism of the Zwickau prophets, which was daily gaining the ascendant at Wittenberg, made it indispensable that not an unnecessary moment should be spent in the Wartburg. On the 17th January, he wrote to Spalatin to implore that the Elector would not imbrue his hands in the blood of the fanatics, nor have them bound and thrown into prison, nor use any kind of violence with them. "I shall soon return, if God will, either to remain at Wittenberg or elsewhere, or to journey from town to town. I was before resolved on returning, and now the rumours which reach me are worse and worse." The month of February was passed in unremitting attention to his work of translation; so much so, that it is only marked in his correspondence by one letter, strikingly characteristic, addressed in a consolatory tone of undaunted faith to the Elector Frederic. "Grace and blessing from God the Father, in respect of your new relics. For a long time your Highness has sent after relics into all lands; but now God has heard your desire, and has sent you without your expense or pains a whole cross with nails, spears, and scourges. Once more, I say, Grace and blessing from God, for your new relics. Fear not: stretch out your arms in confidence, and let the nails enter deep: be thankful and joyful. It must and shall be so, with whoever shall hold fast God's word, that not only Annas and Caiaphas shall roar, but also a Judas shall be among the Apostles, and Satan among the children of God. Only let your Highness be prudent and wise, and not be led by reason and the appearance of things. Tremble not: all is not as Satan would have it. Your Highness must believe me, fool as I am, a little longer; I know these and such-like snares of Satan, and, therefore, I fear nothing, and that is, Woe to him. All is not as it seems. Let the

1522. world scream and pass its censure; let who will fall, fall: St. Peter and the Apostles shall come again on the third day at Christ's resurrection. That must still be fulfilled in us—'approving ourselves as the ministers of God in afflictions, in tumults.' Your Highness will excuse that my pen has run so fast in my haste: I have no more time; and shall myself, if God will, soon be there."

Luther toiled on at his translation, with his ear open to the tidings which continually reached him of the progress of fanaticism at Wittenberg. He heard that Melancthon avowed his "inability to stay the torrent;" that Carlstadt vindicated his preaching anywhere and everywhere against the remonstrances of the Court, because, as he said, "the Word had come to him with such velocity * that he felt, Woe is me, if I do not preach!" that the Elector by his councillors had appealed both to the Town Council, and the University for the restoration of order, but without effect; that Amsdorf preached in the parish church against violence and tumult, but the popular frenzy would brook no restraint. Such intelligence successively received gave speed to his energy, and scarcely allowed him to relinquish the pen from his hand for a moment. At last February was closing, and the translation of the New Testament was completed. What was there now any longer to detain him in his tower, when Satan had entered among his flock at Wittenberg in the form of an angel of light, and was scattering the sheep, and rending the work of God? He resolved accordingly to leave his Patmos on Saturday the 1st March; and how strong was the tension of his faith, the strain of the preceding letter may demonstrate. On the evening of the Friday, when the arrangements for his journey had all been made, a letter was received from Frederic, requiring him to remain in his retreat, and employ himself in composing

* Geschwindigkeit.

his defence for presentation to the Diet, which had begun its session at Nuremberg: on no account whatever to quit his asylum, for it was impossible that he could undertake to defend him, and the Emperor and the Pope would demand his surrender into their hands, and how could he excuse himself? But Luther's decision had been irrevocably taken; his eye was towards God alone; Frederic admitted this world, the princes, and the Diet, in the background of the picture, present to his worldly wisdom. Luther, on the contrary, discerned evidently the finger of God summoning him back to his old post; and his mind was too exclusively possessed with the interests of religion, to let the command, even of his prince, much less the apprehension of personal danger, weigh a feather in the balance.* 1522.

It was late in the evening of Shrove Tuesday, the 4th March, when two Swiss students from the town of Basle, stopped at the sign of the Black Bear, in the outskirts of Jena. They had passed on through a pelting storm of rain into the heart of the town; but the usual scene of rioting, masquerading, and jollity, the sure accompaniments of the Carnival in Roman Catholic districts, having attracted the neighbouring country people and strangers of all kinds to Jena, the central inns were crowded to overflowing, and the two Swiss travellers had been compelled to seek entertainment in a less frequented quarter. On entering the parlour of the Black Bear they found a knight seated alone at the table, accoutred in his riding apparel, red mantle, trunk-hose, and doublet, which showed that he was a traveller like themselves; his right hand rested on the pommel of his sword, and a book was open before him, which he was intently perusing. The Swiss students paused in the entrance on observing the knight, and were proceeding to take their places

* See the letter, Walch. XV. p. 2377. Bret. II. p. 561.

1522. at some distance, out of respect to the stranger, and in consideration of their wet and travel-stained garments, when the knight, courteously addressing them, offered them seats at the table, and, handing them a glass of beer, enquired from what part of Switzerland they were come. St. Gall, they said, was their native canton; but they had been recently students at Basle, and were now on their road for Wittenberg, as they intended to study at that University. The conversation naturally turned to Erasmus, the state of religious matters at Basle, and the reputation in which Martin Luther was held there. The students ordered some wine, and requited their hospitable reception by offering some of it to the stranger. "If you are going to Wittenberg," said the knight, continuing the conversation, "you will find one of your own countrymen, Dr. Jerome Schurff, there." They replied, that the principal object of their journey was to see Dr. Martin Luther himself, and they should be extremely obliged to the knight, if he could inform them by what means they would be likely to obtain a sight of him. "I know, for a certainty," the knight replied, "that he is not at present at Wittenberg, but I am equally assured that he soon will be there." He then spoke of Philip Melancthon, and his immense erudition, and advised the students to pay the most careful attention to his lectures, and use the utmost assiduity for the acquirement of Greek and Hebrew, that they might be able to read the Scriptures in the original languages. But the students' curiosity had fixed itself upon Martin Luther, and they cared comparatively little about Melancthon. "We understand," they rejoined, "that Luther's aim is to do away with the clergy and the mass, and, as we have ourselves been educated for holy orders, we are anxious to learn on what basis his principles are built." "What is thought of Luther by your countrymen?" the knight enquired. "Some persons," they

answered, "cannot be loud enough in his praise; and others 1522.
are not able to find words strong enough to express their detestation." "Yes, of course," muttered the knight, "those are the priests." Emboldened by this familiar conversation, one of the students had the curiosity to open the volume, which was still lying on the table, in which the knight had been reading, and found to his surprise that it was the Psalter in Hebrew. "I would willingly give my little finger," he remarked, shutting up the book, and eager to find some apology for his inquisitiveness, "if I understood that language." "You have only to persevere," the knight answered, "and you may be assured that your wish will be gratified." But the curiosity of the students was now redoubled to know who the strange knight could be, who, booted and spurred, and with a sword at his side, talked nevertheless of Erasmus and Melancthon, and read Greek and Hebrew.

In the middle of the conversation the landlord entered the room, and having heard the two Swiss express their eagerness to see Luther, observed, "Good friends, you should have been here two days ago, and you would have had your wish, for he sat in that very chair and at that very table," pointing to where the knight was seated. The landlord went out with a broad laugh on his countenance, and soon afterwards, calling one of the students aside, whispered in his ear, "I heard you say just now that you wanted to see Martin Luther; I will tell you a secret, if you can keep it: it is Luther with whom you have been conversing." "You are making a fool of me," the student exclaimed in astonishment. "No; it is Luther himself; you may be assured that I am telling you the truth; only don't let him perceive that he is recognised." The Swiss hastened back to the parlour, and contrived, whilst leaning forward as if he were looking at the door, to apprise his companion that their host had just told him the strange knight

1522. was Luther. "Impossible!" the other answered, "he must have said Hutten; the two names sound something alike." They agreed that the ear must have confused the sounds, and that the knight with the Hebrew Psalter was Ulric von Hutten.

Presently two travelling merchants entered the apartment, one of them with an unbound book in his hand, which he showed to the company, and which proved to be the first part of Martin Luther's "Postils," or "Commentaries on the Gospels and Epistles," dedicated to Albert the youngest of the counts of Mansfeld, and which had just been published. The book attracted the attention of the knight, and he observed, "I shall soon procure that book."

It was now time for supper to be served; but the two Swiss, whose purses were but leanly furnished, apprehending the cost of sitting down to the same repast with a knight and two wealthy merchants, requested that they might be provided for apart. But the landlord told them that he would be considerate and not fleece them; and the knight, who guessed the true ground of their demurring to partake of supper with the merchants and himself, invited them to become his guests: "Come, come, I shall settle the score." The conversation at the supper-table quickly became exceedingly animated, and the knight delivered himself of such sensible and shrewd remarks, with so much point and fluency, that the rest of the company thought less of enjoying their meal than of listening to his observations. He dilated with some severity on the senseless manner in which the German nobles assembled at Nuremberg in attendance on the Diet were wasting their time, and instead of devoting their thoughts to the business of their country, were engaged in tourneys, sledging, revelling, and pageantry. "Such," he said, "are our Christian princes!" "It is plain that that Martin

Luther," exclaimed one of the merchants, "is either an angel 1522.
from heaven or a devil from hell; I would give ten guilders to have the opportunity of confessing to him."

At the conclusion of supper the landlord whispered to the students, "Martin has settled the reckoning." The merchants now rose from table to retire to rest, and thanking the knight for his generous hospitality, intimated that they supposed him to be Ulric von Hutten. The host came in shortly afterwards, and the knight related to him with a smile how he had just been taken for Hutten. "No, you are not Hutten," rejoined the landlord, "you are Martin Luther." Bursting into a hearty laugh, the knight exclaimed, "What! they take me for Hutten, and you for Luther; I shall be taken next for Markolfus!" The Swiss were left alone in the room with the knight, who, filling a glass with beer, and raising it to his lips, challenged his messmates in the manner of the country: "Swiss, one glass more for thanks!" He was going to pass the glass to them, when recollecting that they did not drink beer, but wine, he poured out a glass of wine, and presented it to them instead. Then rising from table, and throwing his military cloak about his shoulders, he shook hands with the students, requesting them not to forget to give his salutation to Dr. Jerome Schurff. And "Who are we to say," they inquired, "bids us offer him his salutation?" "Say," replied the knight, "that he who should come sends his salutation to him; he will know who it is."

The next morning the knight rose with the break of day, and was already mounted on his horse at the door of the inn, ready to depart, when the two merchants, who had been informed meanwhile by the landlord that the stranger was Martin Luther, hurried towards the knight, and offered their apologies for the freedom and incivility of their remarks the night before, of which they had been guilty in entire igno-

1522. rance who he really was. "Well," the knight replied with a smile, "if you go to Wittenberg, and confess to Martin Luther, as you spoke of doing, you will see whether I am he or not:" and so saying, and nodding a farewell, he rode from the court of the Black Bear.

That day, the 5th March (Ash Wednesday), Luther—for the courteous knight with the Hebrew Psalter was no other—continued his ride until he reached Borna, a small town in the vicinity of Leipsic, where he rested for the night at the sign of the Guide. And that evening he wrote from Borna a letter to the Elector of Saxony, in reply to the communication which he had received from him the evening before he set out from the Wartburg, in prohibition of his return. "Your Highness' letter reached me on Friday evening, when I had already fixed to start on my journey on the following morning. It needs no acknowledgment or testimony from me that the intention of your Highness is all for the best; for I am as assured it is so, as any human conviction can make me. On the other hand, that my own intention is for good, I know from a higher than any human conviction.

* * * "What I wrote to your Highness did not proceed from any regard to myself; I never thought of that, but from concern at the gross proceedings which have recently transpired at Wittenberg, to the extreme scandal of the Gospel. I apprehended that your Highness would be greatly troubled by it. It has so grieved me myself, that were I not confident that the dear Gospel is with us, I should tremble for our cause. Every suffering that has as yet assailed me in this cause is mere child's play, and as nothing to it. Willingly, could I have done so, I would have redeemed us from such a scandal with my life. We cannot answer for it, either before God or the world: and it is woe to my very heart. The purport of my letter was, to direct the attention of your Highness

to the plain footprint of the devil in this disgraceful game. If 1522.
your Highness needed not such admonition, at least it behoved me to tender it.

"As regards my own cause, I answer, whether your Highness knows it or not, let it now be declared, that I have not received the Gospel from man, but from heaven, through our Lord Jesus Christ, so that I well might boast, and write myself, and henceforth I will do so, his servant and evangelist. That I offered my tenets for disputation, was never because I felt the slightest question of their truth, but in the hope of winning over others to embrace them. But I now see that my humble tone has been an injury to the Gospel, and that Satan will seize the vacant ground if I only give him a hand's breadth of room; and, therefore, henceforth my conscience will compel me to act otherwise. Satan knows well that what I did I never did from fear. He saw my heart when I entered Worms, that had I known that so many devils would have set upon me, as there were tiles upon the housetops, I should have sprung into the midst of them with joy.

"Now Duke George is, after all, very different from only one devil. And since the Father of infinite mercies has made us joyful lords over all devils, and over death, and has given us the kingdom of faith, that we can dare to call him, 'Dear Father,' your Highness may infer that it is the deepest shame to our Father, not so far to trust him, as to believe that we shall be lords over the fury of Duke George. I well know that if the scene of this disturbance were at Leipsic, instead of at Wittenberg, I would ride into that town—your Highness must pardon my silly talk—although it should rain nothing but Duke Georges for nine days, and each one of them tenfold as furious as he is. He fancies my Lord Christ a man of straw, and that my Lord and I may endure for a little while. I will not hide it from your Highness, that I have prayed and wept for Duke George, and that not once merely, that God would

1522. enlighten him with his grace. And I will pray and weep for him once again; but never more after that. I implore your Highness to help too with your prayers, if by any means we may turn away from him the judgment, which, O Lord God! is hastening with what speed to overtake him every hour of the day. I could choke Duke George with one word, if all could be settled so.

"I would have your Highness know that I come to Wittenberg under a much higher protection than that of the Elector. I have not the least intention of craving protection from your Highness. On the contrary, I believe that I shall be better able to protect your Highness than your Highness will be to protect me. If I thought that your Highness either could or would protect me, I should not come. This cause no sword either can, or shall counsel, or help. God must do all alone, without any care or aid of man. He who has the most faith will be the best able to afford protection. And knowing that your Highness is still very weak in faith, I can in no wise look upon your Highness as the man to protect or save me.

"Since your Highness desires to know what you should do in this cause, under the impression that you have done too little, I reply, with all submission—Your Highness has done far too much already, and must do nothing at all. For God will not, and cannot endure any care or trouble on your Highness' part or mine. He will have everything left to himself alone. If your Highness can believe this, you will have peace: if your Highness cannot believe this, yet I believe it, and must leave your Highness' want of faith to suffer the qualms of its own cares, which is the portion of those without faith. Since I do not follow the directions of your Highness, your Highness is guiltless before God, should I be apprehended or put to death. Your Highness, as an Elector, must be obedient to the supreme power, and allow his Im-

perial Majesty in your Highness' states and lands, to dispose 1522.
of body and goods, as is his prerogative, according to the ordinances of the Empire, without offering any opposition, or interposing any hinderance, if the sovereign power should please to seize or slay me. For no one shall resist the supreme power save Him who appointed it. To do so, is rebellion against God. I hope, however, they will have sense enough to know that your Highness was rocked in too lofty a cradle to act the part of a gaoler over me. If your Highness will leave the gate open, and respect the safe-conduct, when they come themselves to take me or send their messengers, by such conduct your Highness will sufficiently regard the duty of obedience.

"Herewith I commend me to your Highness in the grace of God. I will write again speedily if there be need. I have despatched this letter in haste, that your Highness might not be grieved by the report of my coming; for I shall and must be a comfort to every one, and not a bane, if I would be a true Christian. I have to deal with a different man from Duke George, one who knows me well, and whom I do not know ill. Could your Highness but believe, you should see the majesty of God: because you have not yet believed, you have as yet not seen it. To God be praise and love for ever. Amen."

The allusion to Duke George in the preceding letter had reference to a proclamation which he had published for the suppression of all Lutheranism in his dominions: Duke Henry of Brunswick and some bishops had published proclamations with a similar object; but that of Duke George breathed inordinate fury, and sentenced Lutheran monks and priests, and all who communicated in both kinds, to prison without mercy.*

* Keil. p. 125. Seckend. I. p. 192.

1522. After two days' more travelling, on Friday, the 7th March, Martin Luther passed through the streets of Wittenberg, and dismounted at the gate of his convent. He retired to his cell, but the transmutation which had taken place in the Wartburg was not immediately reversed; he still wore in the Augustine convent for a day or two the military costume of Yunker George. A letter in which he had replied to the entreaties of the Wittenberg townspeople for his return, had apprised them of his coming as near at hand; but, although his arrival was thus not unexpected, it was not the less welcome to all friends of sober sense and order. The next day after his return Luther repaired to the house of Jerome Schurff, and there found Melancthon, Jonas, Amsdorff, and Augustine Schurff, the brother of Jerome, assembled and waiting his presence. Luther was standing in the centre of this group of professors, minutely inquiring the particulars of all that had passed since he was last with them, when the two Swiss students who had been favoured with the singular rencontre with the knight with the Hebrew Psalter at Jena, were ushered into the apartment. They were standing near the door in awe of the learned society among which they suddenly found themselves, when their eyes fell on the unmistakeable countenance of the knight of Jena, dressed in the same garb as when they had seen him before, who at once recognising them in turn, advanced and gave them a hearty welcome, and introduced them as his friends to the other professors. He led them to Melancthon, and said, "This is Philip of whom you heard me speak at Jena." And on the strength of the acquaintanceship formed in the parlour of the Black Bear, Luther insisted that the two Swiss should spend the rest of the day with himself and his associates.

The Elector was at this time at Lochau, and was deeply affected when he received the tidings of Luther's return.

The heroism of the unfriended monk, who, relying on God alone, discarded human defence in his bold adherence to duty, was exactly calculated to touch the sympathies of a generous prince. Frederic's thoughts naturally turned immediately to the Diet, before whose consideration the Lutheran affair was shortly to be brought, and he thought with alarm on the effect which the hazardous step the Reformer had just taken might produce on the states of the Empire; but as that step could not now be retraced, he determined to use his best efforts to secure Dr. Martin's safety. He wrote therefore on the 6th March to Schurff, "Let Luther write to me stating the reasons of his return, in such a manner that his letter may be made public, and let him expressly avow that he returned without my consent; and let him not on any account preach in All Saints' Church." 1522.

Luther wrote a letter to the Elector in conformity with this request, in which he declared that the reasons which had induced him to venture on returning to Wittenberg were principally three. First, that the common voice of the Church in the most urgent entreaties had implored him to return. God had commissioned him to the Church of Wittenberg, and his conscience would ever have reproached him had he disregarded the call of his flock; and it was not by others' consciences, but by his own conscience, that he must answer to God. Secondly, Satan, as a wolf, had fallen upon his flock in his absence, and excited disturbances, which no writing, nothing he could do, short of his presence and "living mouth" would be able to quell. He would gladly suffer death for his flock; he was bound to do so, for they were his children in Christ, should it be God's will; and the wrath or no wrath * of the whole world was nothing in his estimation

* Aller welt zorn und unzorn hintan zu setzen.

1522. compared with his duty to his flock. Thirdly, he foreboded a general insurrection throughout Germany, in Divine vengeance on the national iniquities; for the common people loved to hear the truth better than to practise it; and the ruling powers were trusting to extinguish with the high hand the light which God had kindled, and were thus provoking the lower orders to rebellion. An infatuation from God had fallen on them, and they were courting destruction for themselves and their children. It was true the spiritual tyranny had been weakened by his writings; but the temporal power, he had now learnt, must bow to the Gospel either in the spirit of love, or under the groans of suffering. He had therefore returned to place himself, in Ezekiel's language, as a wall before the people, to avert from Germany, if possible, the scourge of the Divine anger. But he must act upon his own convictions, and would warn the Elector that the decree passed in heaven was different from that passed at Nuremberg; and that those who were thinking to eat up the Gospel whole, would find to their woe that they had not yet "said grace" over it. In a postscript he requested the Elector, if anything were displeasing to him in the letter, to frame another more conformable to his taste and send it to him. Frederic availed himself of this permission to subdue materially the tone of the epistle. For "Nuremberg," he substituted "earth"—"different from the decree passed on earth," —and he prefixed "all-gracious" to the mention of the Emperor—"my all-gracious lord." On the 12th March Luther despatched the revised, or rather emasculated, letter to the Elector enclosed in a communication to Spalatin, in which he did not omit to complain of "the many signs of the Elector's timorous want of faith." He particularly regretted the epithet "all-gracious" as applied to the Emperor, and he said that only the popular style of speaking reconciled him

to its adoption, for he had an extreme hatred to every form 1522.
of falsehood,* and all the world knew the Emperor had been anything but "all-gracious" towards him.

On the Saturday after Luther's return there was but one theme of remark at Wittenberg; and burgher met burgher, and student student, and with radiant countenances exchanged congratulations on the great event, "Luther is come." His sermon on the morrow was anxiously looked forward to; and before the appointed hour had arrived, the University and the whole town had poured itself into the parish church. Carlstadt and Gabriel Zwilling were there, as well as Jonas and Melancthon, all intent on listening to the man who, under the anathema of the Pope and the ban of the Emperor, it was yet felt, was the only man in Germany equal to the crisis. The fate of the Reformation in fact, and the destiny of humanity, seemed to hang upon his lips.

What events had passed since last Luther stood in that pulpit! But ascending it with the same calmness and quiet self-possession as ever, he began his discourse in his usual unpretending style, insisting on the importance of a clear understanding of the principles of the Christian faith. The first principle he declared to be, that we are all by nature the children of wrath; the second, that God has sent his only-begotten Son that we should believe in him, and that whoever with the heart trusts in him is free from all sin and a child of God. On these two momentous points he found no error nor failing among his flock. On the contrary, such first principles were clearly preached to them; it would be grief indeed to him were it otherwise: nay, he could clearly see, and would dare to say, that several of them were better taught than he was; not merely one, two, three, or four, but ten or

* Fucos mire odi.—De Wette, II. p. 150.

1522. more, so enlightened were they in knowledge. The third principle was, that "we must also have love, and through love act towards one another, as God has acted towards us through faith." Without such love faith availed nothing; nay, without it faith was no faith, but a mere semblance, just as the countenance of a man reflected in a mirror is no real countenance but a semblance of the real. Under this head, however, he had to regret a lamentable failure; he could see no proof of such love in them, but must mourn over their sad defect of gratitude towards God for the rich treasure he had bestowed. Wittenberg was too like Capernaum. The fourth principle was the necessity of patience. "For the devil sleepeth not, but gives enough to do." By enduring trials faith waxed stronger day by day; and a patient heart, graced with virtue, could never rest, but would strive for the profit and well-being of every brother, after the pattern of the Divine love.

After laying down these principles, the discourse addressed itself more pointedly to the recent religious changes. It was the bounden duty of every one to regard what was of use and furtherance to his brother, and not always to do all that he had a right to do. St. Paul declared, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient:" and God, by the mouth of Moses said, "I have carried thee as a mother doth her children." How did a mother rear her children? At first by giving them milk, then pap, then other soft food. So must we bear with our brother's weakness, and feed him with milk till he should grow strong; and not go to heaven alone, but take our brother with us. "Dear brother, hast thou sucked enough? cut not away the breast, but let thy brother suck, as thou hast sucked." The changes which had been made were good, but the zeal had been too precipitate; and there were brothers and sisters on the other side who were yet

to be brought over. The sun in the firmament had its light and 1522.
its warmth; nothing was so strong as to bend from its path the glance of the sunbeam; but the heat turned and bent itself on all sides round the sun. Faith, like the sun's ray, must be inflexible, rooted in the heart, and never swerving from its course; but love, like the sun's warmth, must shed itself on all sides, and fold our neighbour in its embrace. Some could run, others could scarcely creep, and the weak must not be left to be torn to pieces by the devil, by the strong outstripping him. He had himself been the first to preach the truth at Wittenberg; and he well knew that he had proclaimed the clear Word of God. They must lie under one another's feet, reach out the hands to one another, and help one another. The contest was now, not against the Pope or his bishops, but against the devil. Did any suppose the devil slept? He was not asleep, but he saw the true light going out, it no longer flashed bright under his eyes, and he would soon run in at the side if they were not on the watch. He knew him well, he had eaten many a lump of salt with him, and he hoped, by God's grace, that he was his master. It was true the mass was an impiety, but why had order been forgotten in abolishing it? Such an undertaking ought to have been commenced with earnest prayer; and the civil power should have been called in to lend its aid. Some things *must* be, others might, or might not be. Faith must be. But in such things as might or might not be, regard must be paid to the profit of others; and to encourage a weak brother to eat meat on Fridays, was, perhaps, to load his conscience with scruples which would press sore on him in the death agony. They must earnestly supplicate God, and each act with patience and brotherly love, or all the woe which the Reformation had heaped upon the Papists, would recoil on the Reformation itself.

On Monday Luther again mounted the pulpit, and preached

1522. more particularly on the subject of the mass. The mass was a bad thing, and God detested it, for it was pretended that it was a sacrifice and a good work, and therefore it must be abolished. His prayer was, that all private masses throughout the world might be abolished, and only the common evangelical mass be celebrated! But love must reign in the matter. No one must draw or tear another away by the hair, but leave God to do his own work, for the plain reason that no man has in his hand the hearts of others, and no man can make his words pass deeper than the ear. The Word of God must be freely preached, and this Word must be left to work in the heart; and when the heart was won, then the man was won, but not till then. And as soon as by such means a general agreement was effected, then the work of abolition would be properly carried into effect. Not that he wished to restore the mass; he "would let it lie where it was in the name of God:" but there could be no such thing as seizing or binding the faith. Faith must be free. When Paul walked from one idol to another at Athens, and saw them all, he moved not one of them with his foot, but he went into the market-place and preached against idolatry; the Word settled in their hearts, and then the idols fell. The Word of God had created heaven and earth, and all things, and that Word must be the operating power, and "not we poor sinners." His own history was an example of the power of the Word. He declared God's Word, preached and wrote against Indulgences and Popery, but never used force: but this Word, whilst he was sleeping, or drinking his tankard of Wittenberg ale with Philip and Amsdorf, worked with so mighty a power that the Papacy had been weakened and broken to such a degree, as no prince or emperor had ever been able to break it. Yet he had done nothing, the Word had done all. Blood would have been shed if he had been disposed to tumult; and at Worms

a game would have been set on foot in which the Emperor 1522.
would have trembled for his safety: but that would have been a fool's game, only destruction of body and soul. *He* had done nothing, he had left the Word to its own action. What did they suppose the devil thought when man exerted his own power to accomplish the purposes of truth? Seated in the depths of hell, he thought, O! what a fine sport these fools will make for me! but it was woe to him, when any one suffered the Word to operate unimpeded. The Word was almighty, it took captive the heart, and then the work followed as a matter of course. In St. Paul's time there were great contentions whether the law of Moses was binding in all its parts or not. Paul preached that a "might or might not be," should not be changed into a "must be," but the question should be left to each one's decision according to his own conscience. This settlement remained in force until Jerome came, who was for abolishing every remnant of Judaism, and establishing the "must be." Then came Augustine, who understood Paul's meaning, whereas Jerome was a full hundred miles away from it. The two Doctors thrust their heads hard together. On Augustine's death Jerome introduced the "must be," and enacted a law. From one law sprang a thousand laws, till they were overrun with laws. So would it be now: one law would grow to two, two to three, and so on. Compassion must be shown to weak consciences, and Christian freedom be maintained.

On Tuesday he touched on the monastic life, and applied the same principle. "He could wish that every monk and nun heard his preaching, and had sense to leave the cloister, and that every monastery throughout the world might cease to exist." But it was left free by God to marry or to be unmarried, to eat fish, or to eat flesh, and God's freedom must not be turned into a command. From this subject he passed

1522. to that of images. These were unnecessary: "we might have them or not have them; although it were better to be without them." The one party quoted the words of the Almighty, "Thou shalt make to thyself no graven image, nor the likeness," &c.: the other party said—Yes, but the Almighty has added, "Thou shalt not worship them." Noah, Abraham, and Jacob had built altars; Moses had erected a brazen serpent; St. Paul voyaged in a ship which bore as its figure-head the twin gods Castor and Pollux. Yet St. Paul did not tear away their images. Such representations were permissible, if they were not worshipped; if they were, they must be removed, as Hezekiah broke in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made, when it appeared that the Israelites addressed prayers to it. The Word must be preached, that images are nothing, that God is not served by such things; and such a course would more effectually do away with them than their tumultuous and forcible destruction. To destroy them at Wittenberg might be to keep them standing at Nuremberg. Outward things could do no injury to faith, provided the heart did not hang upon them.

On Wednesday he resumed the subject of images. For any man to fancy he did a work acceptable to God by placing a silver or gold image in a church was direct idolatry; and the Elector Frederic, the Bishop of Halle, and others, who had spent so much wealth on images, would never have done so had they known that an image is nothing in God's estimation, and that it is far better to give a single guilder to a poor man than to dedicate an image of gold to God. A crucifix was not God—God was in heaven. That images were grossly abused no one could gainsay; but that was not sufficient reason for destroying them. If everything that was abused ought to be abolished, the sun, moon, and stars, which some nations worshipped, must be torn down from their seats in

the heavens; wine and women must be done away with; nay, 1522.
a man must destroy himself, as his own heart was his greatest foe.* He could wish there were not an image in the whole World; but not compulsion, but the free preaching of God's Word, must hurl down the images. He passed to the subject of feasts and fasts. No one could deny that Christians were free to eat flesh, fish, eggs, and butter, when they pleased. The Pope had instituted a foolish dead ordinance—"Thou shalt not eat flesh on Fridays, but fish—Thou shalt eat only fish on fast-days, not butter or eggs." To vindicate Christian freedom against the Pope and stiff-necked persons, it was right to transgress openly these ordinances of men. But, for the sake of the weak in faith, who would willingly believe what they ought, but were hindered through ignorance, it was meet to act with patience and avoid giving offence. On this principle St. Paul circumcised Timothy. But when St. Peter first ate swine flesh with the Gentiles, then abstained from it with the Jews, and thus led the Gentiles to conclude that they must keep the Mosaic law, St. Paul reasoned with him—"If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Thus evangelical freedom would use discernment of persons and seasons.

On Thursday he treated of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, particularly of taking the bread with the hand, and of receiving the Sacrament in both kinds. Their conduct in respect to that sacrament, which "is our highest treasure," had been such, that it would have been no wonder if thunder and lightning had struck them to the earth. God might endure all the rest, but he could by no means endure that

* The reasoning is not very conclusive, as there is a material distinction between trials and temptations ordered in the course of Divine Providence, and self-created trials. Images are of the latter kind

1522. they had made a compulsory ordinance. And if they did not recede from it, no Emperor need drive him from amongst them: he would himself depart undriven, and say of them, that no foe, although his foes had occasioned him much suffering, had ever dealt him such a blow as they had dealt him. The words of the Saviour, "Take and eat," did not necessarily imply "Take with the hand;" and in imagining the handling of the bread and the cup essential to a right reception, they were as silly as the Papists, who would not permit the altar-cloth to be washed by any woman, not even a pure nun, and if any one touched the body of the Lord would cut off his finger, or yet worse. If handling the Lord made a Christian, Herod and Pilate would be the best of Christians. It was neither a good nor a bad act to take the bread with the hand; but for the sake of the weak in faith it had better be discontinued. He approved of the administration in both kinds as agreeable to the institution of Christ, but it must not be framed into an ordinance and made compulsory. If they supposed they were good Christians because they handled the body of the Lord and received the Sacrament in both kinds, they must be told they were very bad Christians; for a sow with her great snout could do as much, and so far be a good Christian. No outward act, but faith, made the Christian. The Word must be preached through the length and breadth of the land; and if they demeaned themselves soberly, many weak but goodhearted men would come over to them, when they had heard the Word as long as they had.

Friday was devoted to the renewed consideration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, particularly the preparation necessary in those who would partake of it—"Faith, in a humbled and trembling heart."

Saturday resumed the subject, and was employed in investigating the effect of worthily partaking of the Sacrament,

which he stated to be more particularly the increase of love, 1522.
doing to our fellow-creatures as God has done to us.

Sunday, the 15th March, wound up the series of discourses with the topic of confession. There were two kinds of confession grounded upon Scripture. The first, for open sins, enjoined by Christ, and alluded to in the words, "If thy brother sin against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother; but if he refuse to hear thee, tell it unto the Church." If the guilty party would not take the warning of the congregation in good part then it was incumbent that he should be excommunicated, until he came to his sober senses and repented. But of this species of confession there were no traces left; and on this point the Gospel was trampled under foot. Whoever would restore this primitive discipline would do a good work. The second kind of confession was for secret sins, when the penitent went into a retired corner, and humbled himself before God, and implored pardon. The third kind of confession was not grounded upon Scripture, but was commanded by the Pope. It consisted in going into a private spot with another, and disclosing the sins and sorrows of the heart in order to hear a word of comfort. The Pope had not that power which he had arrogated to compel Christians to this mode of confession. But, on the other hand, whoever had fought oft and long with Satan must know well how much comfort and strength were thus imparted; and since ours was a sore combat against the devil, death, hell, and our sins, no weapon must be taken from our hands. When the assurance of pardon conveyed from a fellow-creature's lips was believed, and there was deep repentance for sin, and a hearty desire to be rid of it, the human sentence was ratified in heaven. But if any one possessed a firm and steadfast faith that his sins were forgiven him, he needed not the abso-

1522. lution of his neighbour. The Gospel was full of the shelter of Divine absolution, such as the text, "If ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will forgive you your trespasses;" and the clause in the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them," &c. Baptism enabled us to cry to God, "See, O Lord, I am baptized in thy name, whereby I am assured of thy grace and compassion." The general absolution was moreover as if God himself declared, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper we ate his body and drank his blood as a token that God has loosed us from our transgressions.

These discourses from first to last were listened to by crowded congregations with fixed attention. The whole history of the preacher, the fact, to which he appealed, that he had been the first to make known the Gospel at Wittenberg, his disinterested zeal, which had led him to brave the imperial edict, and, as he himself said, "throw himself into the midst of the rage of Cæsar and the Pope, surrounded only by a heavenly guard," weighed on the minds of his audience, and put the seal of authority on his words. His conduct at Worms had thrown a lustre on Germany as well as rendered him more than ever the idol of his countrymen, and he now reappeared amongst his flock from some mysterious retreat, at a period of agitation and tumult, as in old time one of the prophets of Jehovah might suddenly appear on the scene after a temporary withdrawal, with a Divine message to the backsliders of Israel. The great majority even of those who had taken part in the disturbances excited by Carlstadt and the Zwickau fanatics, were electrified by the moving eloquence of the preacher, the face, the form, the manner of the tried champion of truth, the accents of the well-known voice meeting the ear after an interval short in time but longer than a century in momentous events; and with con-

scious inferiority bowed before the unwavering decisions of a 1522.
powerful intellect and a deeply Christian heart. In truth, at no moment of his career does Luther appear greater. In opposing the recklessness of lawless innovation, maintaining Scripture against fanaticism, and insisting on charity as the true exemplification of faith, he added completeness to his testimony at Worms, and greatly enhanced its value by proving the purity of his motives, and the soundness of his scripturally informed judgment. And in his discourses, whilst there was unhesitating clearness, there was the gentleness of affection blended with authority. He forbore from personal allusions, and abstained from touching on the Zwickau doctrines at all, as though he were unwilling to suppose it possible that his flock could be victims to such senseless infatuation. And the self-sacrifice of his courageous deportment, and the love which his acts attested and his words breathed, were vouchsafed the reward of the most speedy and complete triumph. The routine of customary life was restored as by magic. The merchant was again at his desk; the student at his books; the schools were again crowded with scholars, the lecture-rooms with auditors; order reigned in the churches and in the streets. Before the discourses had been concluded these effects began to show themselves; and Dr. Schurff wrote to the Elector,* "O! what joy has Dr. Martin's return diffused amongst us, whether learned or unlearned! He is daily by Divine mercy bringing back our deluded people into the way of truth. It is as clear as daylight that the Spirit of God is with him, and a special Providence has ordered his return." One of the first to acknowledge and renounce his errors was Gabriel Zwilling. When he was asked if he did not think Luther a wonderful preacher,

* See the letter, Walch. XV. p. 2401. It was written March 15.

1522. he answered, "I seem to have been listening to no voice of man, but that of an angel from heaven." Wolfgang Capito, the temporising chaplain of the Archbishop of Mentz, spent two days at Wittenberg, in order to attend Luther's discourses, and heard counsels of moderation and charity from lips of sincerity and truth with no feigned delight. Even Carlstadt became reconciled to Luther in appearance; and whatever objections he might really entertain against his doctrines, for the present at least behaved as if he were convinced of his errors.

The principle laid down by Luther, and now acted upon, was liberty within the lines drawn by God's Word; to abolish every usage plainly forbidden by Scripture; but wherever the verdict of Holy Writ was less evident, to permit the retention of the custom, or its disuse, as each individual conscience might dictate. This leniency did not proceed from any tincture of indifference, but was the simple exercise of the true spirit of Christian charity. Luther with strict consistency turned round upon the enthusiastic party, and applied to them exactly the reproof which he had before directed against the Papists, that "the Pope had erected a tyranny, and they had only thrown down his to set up a tyranny of their own." No ordinance was to be enacted where God had made none. But his own views were defined on all the topics which had come under discussion, and in his letters, as in his preaching, he gave a distinct statement of them. "I condemn," he wrote to Hansmann, "images, but by the Word; I would not have them burnt, but no confidence placed in them. I condemn the laws of the Pope on confession, communion, prayer, and fasting, but by the Word, that the conscience may be set free."* And he appealed from the pulpit

* De Wette, II. pp. 151, 152.

to the recollection of his hearers, whether he was not now 1522.
teaching what he had always taught.* Proceeding on this charitable and enlightened ground, it was determined that both the elements should be administered in the communion, and on this subject Luther composed a treatise at this time; but that they should not be received with the hand: that private confession should or should not be resorted to at the discretion of the individual, but that regard should be had to the fitness of those admitted to be communicants; and that, for the present, the Latin service for the mass should still be used, with the omission of the words in which it was designated as a sacrifice: and that the private mass should be altogether abrogated. Such images as had been untouched were to be left standing: and to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays was put on the same footing as private confession. Gabriel Zwilling was for a time suspended from preaching: but soon afterwards Luther was himself a petitioner in his behalf to Spalatin; and towards the close of April recommended him as preacher to the Town Council of Altenburg, who had applied to him to send them a man learned in the Scriptures: and, on opposition being offered by the canons of that town to his appointment, the Reformer pleaded his cause himself with Frederic. Carlstadt, who had intruded himself into the pulpit of the parish church without any sufficient call—for Luther could not recognize a right to preach without a call from the congregation—was gravely admonished of his error; and a treatise of Carlstadt's already in the press was prohibited from publication by the University, but without any request

* Ranke and D'Aubigné both regard Luther as modifying his teaching at this time in insisting on the necessity of charity; but it is easy to prove from his writings that his doctrine had always been the same, and he only advanced this or that section of it more prominently because circumstances demanded it.

1522. to that effect or sanction of such proceeding on the part of Luther.*

Such was the quiet prevailing at Wittenberg after a lengthened storm, when Mark Stubner, and Nicolas, or Claus Stork, returned from their proselyting efforts in the neighbourhood, to find their forces at head quarters completely put to the rout. Irritated beyond measure at the reverses which had befallen their doctrines in their absence, and elate with the dignity of being the inspired of Heaven, they demanded a conference with the Reformer, which Luther, who well knew the impatience of their temper, and the haughtiness of their ignorance, was unable to decline, however much disposed to do so. He therefore appointed a place, day, and hour, for the conference. The schoolmaster, Martin Mohr, or Cellarius, who had so warmly exulted in the proposed extinction of all learning, and had remained proof against the compunctions of common sense, which, under Luther's preaching, had revisited the minds of most of those at first bewildered by fanaticism, was the most vehement among the prophets, raged, roared, and foamed at the mouth, although uninvited to bear a part in the discussion. Stubner called on Luther to become a convert to the Zwickau creed; and when answered that all which the prophets advanced was contrary to Scripture, declined to enter into argument, but renewed the demand of

* In a letter of the 21st April to Spalatin, Luther says, "I implored Carlstadt in private not to publish anything against me, that I might not be compelled against my will to push against him horn to horn. He said that he had not written anything against me; but his manuscript, which is in the hands of the Rector and University, tells a different tale. They are soliciting him to retract or suppress his book, for which I am no advocate (quod non urgeo). I do not fear Satan or an angel from heaven, much less Carlstadt." Three days later he writes, "I hear the publication of Carlstadt's book is prohibited."—De Wette, II. pp. 184, 185.

implicit credence. Luther then required that, as their doc- 1522.
trine was not only beyond Scripture, but against it, they should at least prove its truth by miracles—the credentials which God had always committed to those whom he had entrusted with an express revelation. The prophets were at a nonplus for an answer; they could not uphold their pretensions by argument, and they could not work miracles; but they still insisted, that their assurances of Divine inspiration should be credited on their own authority, and loudly asserted that the time would come when Luther would be compelled to credit them. Mohr stamped on the ground, and beat the table with his fists, like a frantic man. Yet, although they could lay no claim to any sensible miracle, they pretended to be gifted with prophetical power; and Stubner warned Luther that he was informed, that at the very moment the Reformer was expressing his incredulity, a secret emotion was disposing him to yield assent to their doctrines. Luther was silent for a while, and then exclaimed, "The Lord rebuke thee, Satan." A burst of enthusiasm now transported the prophets, and they shouted with one accord—"The Spirit, the Spirit." "I slap your spirit on the snout," responded Luther. The conference ended by Luther's threatening "their God not to presume on working miracles in opposition to the will of his God." This meeting decided the downfal of the Zwickau fanatics at Wittenberg; and that very day, the prophets in a body abandoned the scene of their former triumphs, and anathematized Luther in a letter addressed to him from Kemberg.*

This period forms an epoch in the history of the Reformation and Luther's life. He had previously been sounding the

* Camerar. Vita Melancthon, pp. 43—53. Seckend. I. p. 193.

1522. general mind, and instituting enquiries rather than answering them; but from this period he no longer spoke as a searcher after truth, but as one who had found it, and was authoritatively commissioned to be its herald to the world. He still wore his monk's cowl and frock, and from his convent cell, as the centre, a vast religious movement spread on all sides, seized everywhere like a flame on the popular mind, and far beyond the limits of Germany, was met by repulsion or sympathy in the court and the cottage.

In the latter part of March, and the month of April, he composed his treatise "On partaking of the Sacrament in both Kinds and other Changes," intended for the German nation, and especially the converts to the Zwickau doctrines, as his sermons had been necessarily addressed to his Wittenberg flock, or auditors from the immediate neighbourhood. After Easter Sunday, which fell on the 20th April, had passed, he set out on a missionary tour through the towns and villages where he understood these fanatical tenets were most prevalent. To prevent the ire of Duke George from making him its victim, he was obliged to resort to a new disguise, and wore the dress of a countryman, but his monk's frock and hood were concealed in his waggon, and he put them on as often as he had occasion to address the people. In this tour he entered Zwickau itself; and from the balcony of the town hall addressed many thousands of the populace, who had congregated in the market-place, from Schneeberg, Annaberg, and all the towns in the vicinity. Without a rival in the art of popular addresses, from his happy union of original thought with the most simple and expressive language, his words fell on his vast audience with a telling power which seemed to promise the speedy return of common sense and Christian love. He passed also through Erfurth and Eulenberg, and was welcomed in Eulenberg Castle, and returned to Witten-

berg before the 6th May, with spirits greatly cheered by the 1522.
reception everywhere given to his exhortations to peace and brotherly forbearance. After his return he addressed an epistle to the evangelical Church of Erfurth, which shows the spirit by which he was actuated in this controversy. "Would," he said, "that the saints and ourselves might be forgotten, Moses and Elias vanish, and neither Abraham nor Israel know us any more, but only Christ crucified fill the heart." But he recommended the greatest indulgence to the weak, abstinence from all violence and vehemence, and reliance on the Word alone. "Christ Jesus," he said, in a private letter, "must remain alone on Mount Tabor;" and in proof that the only point that needed to be insisted upon was the utter uselessness of images, he observed, that, under this conviction, all mention of the saints had insensibly been omitted from his own prayers, and he now implored Christ and God the Father alone.

The subject to which his utmost attention was next devoted was his translation of the New Testament. The whole had been translated by him in the Wartburg; but the work required revision, and he went through it all verse by verse with Melancthon, making use of his friend's great philological attainments in explanation of difficult words or singular constructions, and then with his own mastership of the German tongue rendering each passage in its exact sense. Wherever aid could be procured for this great work it was at once enlisted. Spalatin was consulted on the names, colours, and general appearance of the precious stones mentioned in Rev. xxi., and by the Elector's kindness a box of specimens was forwarded to Wittenberg. On the subject of the coins of the ancients Melancthon made use of the treatise of the French scholar Budæus, but consulted also his friend Camerarius, George Opercus, and other learned men. The work

1522. proceeded rapidly. Before the 14th April the Gospel of St. John had been printed and despatched to Spalatin, who was in attendance on the Elector at Nuremberg. By the 4th July St. Mark and the Epistle to the Romans were likewise forwarded to the Court. And by the 21st September the whole of the New Testament in German was in print, and could be purchased at the moderate sum of a florin and a half. The healing streams of the fountain of life flowed freely amongst a grateful people. As early as December a new edition was called for. Before eleven years had elapsed seventeen editions had issued from the Wittenberg presses alone, besides a much larger issue in other towns of this work, at once the seal of the Reformation's success and the earnest of its increasing triumph.

But whilst the German version of the New Testament was passing through the press, Luther's indefatigable energy had already begun the still more arduous task of translating the whole of the Old Testament from the Hebrew original. As this labour advanced, he exclaimed, "If any man think himself learned, let him attempt to translate the Bible, and he will find out his mistake." The translation was published piecemeal, and each portion or book was rapidly printed off. A fragment of the translation was forwarded to Spalatin as early as the 10th May; and before the end of the year the whole of the five books of Moses had been completed. But with all the ardour which such a work, in the infancy of the Reformation, called into exercise, the immensity of the task of necessity occupied many years before an entire edition of the sacred volume in German could be forthcoming.

No source of information, however humble, was neglected in the endeavour to give Germany as perfect a version as possible of the Old Testament. Before November Luther had translated as far as Leviticus, and whilst engaged in that

book was often to be seen at the stalls of the butchers in the 1522.
town, examining the division of the carcases of oxen and sheep, and learning the technical names of the various parts. On the subject of birds, beasts, and reptiles, on which he found the Vulgate even more than usually unsatisfactory, he consulted Spalatin, who it seems had some acquaintance with natural history. The industry and research which Luther expended on the German version of the Word of God was in marked contrast to the fluency and rapidity with which he threw off the, as he thought, valueless compositions of his own pen. Often one Hebrew word occupied a laborious consideration of three or four weeks. And as long as he lived the correction and improvement of his version of the Scriptures, by which, as his true monument, he desired that his name should be remembered with posterity, was a daily and unceasing study.

And this may be the most appropriate place to mention the means which he adopted for this important end. When the translation of the whole Bible had issued from the press, necessarily very imperfect from the difficulty of the work and the haste of the execution, he organized a synod or sanhedrim of learned men, whose suggestions might be of value for its amendment and more complete finish. This synod was composed of Bugenhagen, Jonas, Melancthon, Cruciger, Aurogallus, and George Rorer, of which last the office was to note down the corrections agreed upon. They met once every week before supper in the Augustine convent; and if any learned man from another university should happen to be on a visit to Wittenberg, he was invited to the conference. Luther brought to the conclave his old Latin Bible and his German version with the Hebrew text interleaved; Melancthon the Septuagint version; Cruciger the Hebrew and Chaldee texts; Bugenhagen his "well-thumbed" Latin

1522. Bible. The Targums and the interpretations of the Jewish Rabbis were also consulted. The portion to be considered was stated beforehand, and, in the interval of the meetings, each studied it in private. When they were met, their opinions on the passage or topic under consideration were asked in rotation, and each, without interruption, delivered himself of the knowledge on the subject with which his researches in the interval or his previous learning had furnished him. But when the true meaning of the Hebrew original, as far as was possible, had thus been elicited, the task of clothing it in the most befitting German devolved on Luther alone. Acquainted with all that had been written in his own language, well read in the national poetry from its earliest bards to his own time, he had peculiar talents for this office; and his rule was to choose the shortest, simplest, and most familiar words and phrases, never forgetting that his translation was to be the poor man's Bible. And it is a high praise, however subordinate to the thanks which all posterity owe him for being the first to translate the Scriptures into a modern tongue from the original text, that, by his prose writings, and yet more by the purity of his German Bible, he fixed the standard of his own language, and became the father of German literature as well as the father of the Protestant Churches. The anniversary of the day on which the German version of the Scriptures had been completed was solemnly kept in Bugenhagen's house, and was spent in united prayer and songs of thanksgiving to God.

Next to the Bible itself, Luther valued the Annotations of his "dear Philip" on the sacred text; but his encomiums could not overcome Melancthon's diffidence of his own merits. Not only was Philip ever willing that the publication of his works should be retarded until the Wittenberg presses had given Luther's, as they were successively written, to the

world; but it was with extreme reluctance that he would 1522.
suffer some of his writings, on which others set a high value, to appear in print. His Commentaries on the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians he absolutely refused to publish. So Luther abstracted them from his closet, and sent them to the press, prefixing a preface, addressed to Melancthon himself, to the following effect:—"'Be angry, and sin not; commune with thyself upon thy bed, and be still.' It is I who have published your Annotations, and send yourself a present to yourself. If you are not pleased it is well; but it is enough that *we* are pleased. The sin is yours, if there is any sin at all; for why did not *you* publish them? But I am willing to be called a thief, and neither fear your complaints nor accusations. To those who you may suspect will turn up their noses, I answer, 'Do you write something better.' I claim for you what the impious 'Thomists' falsely arrogate to their Thomas, that there was never a better commentator on St. Paul. What does it matter if those famous men and giants deride my judgment. The risk is my own. I shall next steal your Commentaries on Genesis and the Gospels of Matthew and John, if you are not beforehand with me. You say Scripture should be read alone without commentaries. This is very true of Jerome, Origen, and Aquinas; but your Annotations are not so much a commentary as an index to the study of Scripture and the gaining a knowledge of Christ."

In addition to his philological labours, his writings, preachings, and lecturings, "the care of all the Churches" which had welcomed the truth devolved upon Luther, and this was every day becoming a more onerous office. As the religious movement quickened at Wittenberg, its influences were felt more and more strongly throughout the rest of Germany, and beyond its limits. Paul von Spretten proclaimed the Gospel in Augsburg, Wurzburg, Salzburg, and Vienna, and

1522. continued his evangelizing route till he arrived at Iglau in Moravia, where he found a society of Christians who had long existed in separate communion from Rome, and held articles of faith in harmony with those which Luther had proclaimed in Northern Germany with such power. Through Spretten these Bohemian brethren were brought into direct contact with Luther himself, and consulted him on the condition of their Church, and on disputed points of faith and ceremony, particularly on the adoration of the Host. Luther answered, that "neither is the adoration nor the non-adoration of the Host a sin, for faith adored not the bread and wine, but Him whose body and blood the bread and wine contained." And, in a letter to Spretten, marked by a total absence of dogmatism, and a sharp stricture on idle curiosity in religion, he asserted, on the subject of the Eucharist, the doctrine of "concomitancy," that is, of "consubstantiation;" but he added, "the Sacrament itself is not absolutely necessary, faith and charity *are* absolutely necessary: it is only faith that consecrates the elements." Luther examined the ambassadors from the Bohemian brethren as to the actual doctrines of their Church, and found them sound in all essentials, although their tenets were expressed in a phraseology which he designated as "obscure and barbarous, not being derived from Scripture." He found their faith correct on the Eucharist and on Baptism: they baptized infants, but "attributed no efficacy to infant baptism," which probably means that they did not believe in baptismal regeneration; they rebaptized those who joined their communion; and, like the Romanists, held seven sacraments. But it filled Luther's heart with sorrow to learn that there were some amongst the Bohemians who meditated submitting themselves to the Roman Church, in order to put an end to the various sects which divided and distracted them; and he despatched,

by the ambassadors, an epistle to the Bohemian estates, 1522.
earnestly dissuading them from giving their sanction to such scandalous degeneracy. "The times had been," he said, "when he had abhorred the name of Bohemian, but he had since learnt that the Pope is Antichrist, and now no one was more frequently reviled with the taunt of Bohemian than himself; and he trusted ere very long the Bohemians and the Germans would have one faith and one name. It was true the apostle forbade sects and schism; but these flourished most under the Papacy. The mendicants were split into several orders, all hating one another; and the Franciscan order itself was split into divisions; and it was only by divisions that the Pope kept his throne. There was but one road to unity—the pure Gospel and one Christ. And to be reconciled to Rome would be the same as to imbrue their hands in the blood of their own martyrs, Huss and Jerome, to abjure Christ the Lord, and become children of perdition." And he implored them to stand fast "in that opposition to the devil in which they had hitherto persisted to the death, and not to bring contumely on the reviving faith of the Gospel." Thus, as Huss had been by his writings an instrument in Luther's enlightenment, the German Reformer repaid the benefit by building up in their martyr's faith the spiritual children of Huss.

It was not only, however, to the land of Huss that Lutheran missionaries travelled, circulating Luther's tracts, and proclaiming the Gospel, but the land of Wycliffe also was the scene of similar exertions. The evangelical tenets were fast spreading in England, where Lollardism, far from dying out, had always been vigorously maintained among the lower orders, and had been rather increased than diminished by the sanguinary cruelty of the clergy, when the "Babylonian Captivity" found its way to the English court, and fell into the

1522. hands of Henry VIII. himself. The King read a little way in the book, and then thrust it from him with the exclamation that it was "most pestilent heresy." He caused Luther's writings to be placed under ban throughout his dominions; and, on the 12th May, 1521, Wolsey, the Lord Chancellor, by royal command proceeded in state to St. Paul's, and committed the publications of the Wittenberg monk to the flames in presence of a large confluence of spectators. He was not however content with this; but, eager to show his learning as well as his zeal, composed a treatise in answer to the "Babylonian Captivity," which he entitled "A Defence of the Seven Sacraments, against Martin Luther, by the most invincible King of England and France, Lord of Ireland, Henry the eighth of that name;" and had it presented by his ambas sador John Clarke, Dean of Windsor, to the Pontiff in full consistory, who received it, as he said, with as much approbation "as if it were a treatise of St. Augustine or St. Jerome." And in a bull, dated the 10th October, 1521, the title of "Defender of the Faith" was conferred upon the royal author.* The book, from the rank of its writer, excited a great deal of notice. "It was written," says Collier, "as it were with the sceptre." Treating the poor monk, as a king might treat a beggar, King Henry seemed to imagine the contest was one of relative station rather than of relative understanding, and that a farrago of school divinity quoted by one of the first monarchs of Europe must be for ever decisive on the merits of the controversy.

There is no allusion to this royal treatise in Luther's correspondence until the summer of 1522, when, in a letter to Lange, he says, inverting the fable of the ass in the lion's skin, "There is a mighty talk about a book of the King of

* See Herbert, p. 95, &c.

England: I suspect that the skin conceals a Lee (leo);" for 1522.
general report averred that Edward Lee, Henry's chaplain, had had a large share in the composition. But, on reading the treatise, his indignation was kindled by the tone of scorn assumed by the haughty monarch, and as the book "was magnified by the clergy as the most learned work that ever the sun saw," and its authority was quoted to deter men from embracing the evangelical doctrines, he resolved to answer it, and expose its folly, and thereby "greatly provoke Satan." True, Henry was a king, and Luther revered the kingly power, but then he was not Luther's sovereign; and the insolence of his language, only exceeded by the ignorance of his arguments, appeared to him an insult from a crowned piece of dust to the King of Heaven. It was to no purpose that the councillors of the Elector and the immediate friends of the Reformer laboured to prevent any reply whatever, or at least to mitigate his violence, by representing that Henry had only advanced the worn-out plea of human authority. He answered the protestations against any bitterness in writing by citing the words of Christ, of Peter, and of Paul, who had termed the Jews "a generation of vipers, murderers, children of the devil, and fools," and convinced that softness of speech was out of place, indeed had been used far too long, he bent his sarcastic and argumentative powers to break the pride of the vain-glorious monarch. His idea was, that, with the back stroke of his pen, Henry had pushed the crown from off his head, and he now intended to supply him with a more befitting head-gear. "The King of England had given an ell or two of coarse cloth, which Lee had cut out and made up into a fool's cap and lined; and it was now his intention to give the whole a good brushing and to put on the bells." He dedicated his answer to the Bohemian Count of Passun, a partisan of the Reformation, whose domains lay on the Bohemian and German con-

1522. fines, in allusion to the royal taunt that he was a Bohemian, and would soon fly to the Bohemians: a taunt which "before God was a glory," and which he accepted as a prediction that his doctrines would find a general welcome from that noble people. "Not," he added, "that I approve everything in the Bohemian Church, for I am ignorant of much respecting it, and I hear that it is split into sects; but, compared with it, the Papist rabble are stench and rottenness throughout the world."

The whole text of the King of England, Luther said in his reply, was replete with the traditions of men, the glosses of the Fathers, and the customs of ages. "The Fathers, the Fathers; customs, customs; statutes, statutes," such was the Papists' cuckoo cry. He should ever respond "The Gospel, the Gospel, Christ, Christ." King Henry, arrogant with his new divinity, imagined whatever he said must needs be because he said it. He fought with his hay and stubble against the rock of God's Word. Insanity itself was not so mad, and stupidity itself not so gross. A mass of rottenness and a worm of the dust dared to forge lies against the King of Heaven: and therefore it must be lawful to befoul the majesty of England with his own mud and dung, and trample on a crown which lifted itself in blasphemy against Christ. The Thomist monarch charged him with contradictions, but whatever he had at any time written in favour of Rome, he would now revoke plenarily and totally: and whereas he had said, "The Papacy is a vigorous hunt led by the Roman Bishop," he would substitute for it this sentence, "The Papacy is the most pestilent abomination of King Satan which ever has been, or ever shall be, under the whole heaven." Such a learned and terrible Thomist as King Henry should extort from him so much by way of revocation. The English monarch accused him of acerbity of language, as if waggon

loads of virulent contumely were the true mode of reforming 1522.
acrimony of language in another. But he had been too gentle towards the Papist monsters in the hope of their repentance: henceforth he should feel convinced he never could sufficiently provoke such stolid blocks, such gross asses, such bloated hogs. But to come to argument, first generally then specially, after the pattern of Aristotle, the Thomist's god. All King Henry's wisdom lay in the force of "So I think," like the reasoners in the schools who on a premiss in their syllogism being denied, have nothing for it but to repeat, "Nevertheless, so I think." "Custom," the King said, "established an article of faith against the plain text of the Gospel," a stretch beyond even Thomist absurdity; and a more direct blasphemy than Satan himself could be charged with. If the Thomist Samsons could allege nothing in behalf of their opinions but custom and antiquity, the faith of the Turks was more ancient than the conversion of Germany to Christianity, and ought to be embraced by the Germans instead of the Gospel. The Church was built, not on the custom or saying of any saint, not on John the Baptist, or Elias, or Jeremiah, or Isaiah, or any of the prophets, but on the only sure foundation, Christ the Son of God. The saints were but fallible men. God's Word alone was unmixed truth. He then advanced to particulars, restricting his observations to one of the Sacraments, the Eucharist. "King Henry had said that to administer the Sacrament in one kind only was within the power of the Church as much as to celebrate the communion in the morning instead of the evening, when Christ instituted it, or to mix water with the wine without any scriptural warrant. But where was the parallelism? Because customs were introduced without any scriptural warrant, did it follow that therefore a custom might be introduced in the teeth of the express letter of Scripture? The

1522. King had built the doctrine of transubstantiation on the text, 'This is my body,' not 'With this,' or 'In this is my body.' But the words of Scripture were, 'He took bread, blessed and brake it, and said, This is my body,' *i.e.*, This *bread* is my body, for the 'this' evidently meant that which was the subject of the taking, blessing, and breaking, viz., the bread. But the King required him to demonstrate that the elements are not transubstantiated. The stupid Thomist, to require him to prove a negative! But he would ask Henry to explain the following passages: 'The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' and 'Whosoever eateth this bread and drinketh this cup,' &c. The Apostle did not say this *body*. Again, to overthrow his assertion that the mass is not a good work or a sacrifice, the only argument which the King's stolid brain could devise was, that if it were not, the laity would never give their wealth to the clergy for celebrating it. So that it depended on the judgment of the laity and the verdict of money whether the mass was indeed a good work and a sacrifice! No harlot made a boast of her shame with more effrontery than this most impudent king made a boast of the covetousness and impositions of the clergy. The king asserted, without the least proof of his words, that the priests in the mass did not only what Christ did at supper, but what Christ did also upon the cross! To which he would answer, that nothing could be plainer, than that the priests not only did not what Christ did at supper, but that they did what the Jews did to Christ upon the cross: for to pervert and extinguish God's Word is the same as to crucify the Son of God. The mass was simply a testamentary promise, it could not therefore be a sacrifice; it was received and eaten, it could not therefore be offered: for amongst the Jews the portion offered in sacrifice was never eaten but burnt. He needed not King Henry's instructions as to what

Ambrose, Augustine, or the Councils affirmed; he denied 1522.
their authority, and therefore to adduce their opinions as decisive was, in true Thomist fashion, to write a book beside the point altogether—'a begging of the question' from first to last."

This answer as much astonished as it exasperated the English Court. Henry, however, did not again venture into the arena of controversy, but left his defence to others. The venerable Bishop of Rochester, not more respectable as a man than virulent as a Papist, doomed himself to fall a victim to that persecuting spirit which he now recommended, published in reply his denunciation of Luther as a pestilent heretic; and, quoting the words of Solomon's Song,* "Take us, the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines;" "this," he said, "is a warning to seize heretics ere they grow big; but this Luther is a large, old, wily, and mischievous fox, and it is hard to catch him; nay, he is a mad dog, a hungry wolf, a fierce she-bear." Sir Thomas More, also destined, like Bishop Fisher, by the retributive justice of Heaven, to lose his life by that very cruelty and self-conceit of his monarch, which he was now fostering, grasped the pen, and accused "the tippler Luther" of ribaldry and coarseness in a writing crammed so full of them both, as quite to outdo in that respect even the object of his censure. Henry's own retaliatory efforts were confined to forwarding letters to Duke George and the Elector of Saxony, representing the doctrines of Luther as subversive of the priesthood, the Papacy, and royalty itself, and calling on them to extinguish his accursed sect. Duke George, not altogether dissimilar from Henry in character, and who, like the king of England, having been intended for holy orders, had enjoyed a better education than was usual with princes in that age,

* Canticles, ii. 15.

1522. heartily sympathised with the aggrieved monarch, and made Luther's treatment of royalty an express matter of complaint against him to the Council of Regency. With Frederic, the expostulations of Henry VIII. produced no further effect than to lead him to regret more strongly than ever the acerbity of the Reformer's controversial writings.

And, on this occasion, Spalatin was directed to express to Luther in decided terms the displeasure and annoyance which the acrimony of his tone had occasioned the Elector. But Luther was by no means in the mood to plead guilty to an accusation dictated, as he believed, by the motive of worldly fear. He had previously been much grieved by the removal of Gabriel Zwilling from his office of preacher at Altenburg, after he had renounced his fanatical errors, and yet more by the maintenance of the mass by the Elector's command in many churches and chantries, and by the continuance of the "Bethaven of All Saints" in all its unprofitable splendour. He therefore turned sharply round on the Saxon court and its chaplain, and read them a plain lecture. "Do not falsely imagine," he wrote to Spalatin, "that God will be mocked. He will not be mocked by a court, however deeply versed in the arts of hypocrisy. And you, too, what are you doing at the court, you, a preacher of the Gospel? Why do you not warn the wicked of his wicked way, and deliver your own soul, as Ezekiel bids you? I know with what powerful words you courtiers are for ever declaiming against my bitterness of language; but is it not much better to exasperate impiety and to give offence to many than to sooth and flatter sin and cling to a false peace? Why thunder your censures against a humble delinquent and pass over the errors of your Prince? This is to have respect of persons, and to disown Christ." His friends, also, at Wittenberg, expostulated with him on the extreme severity of his reply to the royal treatise, to whom he

answered, that "If his enemies, such excellent Christians as 1522.
they thought themselves, were so vituperative, what could be expected from him, whom they called a vile heretic? He had reasons for acting as he had done; they could not be known now, but they would be known hereafter." But everywhere amongst the common people the boldness with which Luther had chastised the ignorance of regal pride rather increased than detracted from his popularity, and ere long events showed that he was far from having declined in the esteem of the German nobility.

The Diet had met at Nuremberg early in the spring, being summoned to enter upon its vocation with all convenient despatch, on account of the progress of Sultan Soliman, who had made himself master of Belgrade, and had spread consternation through the adjoining provinces. This invasion of the Ottomans was very opportune for Luther's security, for it swallowed up for the time every other question, and after providing for the expenses of the war, and regulating those points of internal administration which the great rise in the price of commodities and other circumstances rendered necessary, the Diet broke up its session, and deferred the consideration of religious dissensions until the autumn. But the Council of Regency continued sitting, and before this permanent executive board the furious Duke George of Saxony hastened to bring his complaints of the rapid growth and fanatical tendency of the Lutheran tenets. The disturbances at Wittenberg and elsewhere lent a ready handle to these allegations, so that he succeeded in obtaining an order from the Council that the Bishops of Naumburg, Meissen, and Merseburg should visit the suspected districts, and use their endeavours to repress the rage for innovation and maintain the ancient rites and usages of the Church. In conformity with this order an episcopal visitation was commenced through the

1522. Saxon Electorate, the rite of confirmation was administered, and sermons were preached to the people. Luther's attention was directed to these proceedings, and he wrote to Hausman, the pastor of Zwickau, to inform him on the true meaning of confirmation, which "has no sacramental character belonging to it whatever." "When the episcopal puppet comes to you," he said, "question him closely on the articles of his faith, for they are twice babes in faith and in the knowledge of Christ." But whatever ill effect might be likely to result from this episcopal visitation, by inflaming the anti-papal spirit of the lower orders, was effectually obviated by Luther himself following in the track of the bishops over the field of their exertions. Towards the end of September he set out for Leysnick; in October he visited Weimar; towards its close, and in the beginning of November, he was at Erfurth, where he preached in St. Michael's Church several times.* Everywhere his powerful addresses gained a strong hold on the public mind, and instructed his audience both in the principles of the Christian faith, and also in the duty of obedience to the civil magistrate, denouncing riot and the sword as auxiliaries of truth. Much gratified with the success of his labours, he returned home to shut himself up in his cell to finish with uninterrupted toil his translation of the Pentateuch before the end of the year; and, after achieving that task, he composed a treatise on "the degree of obedience due to the temporal power,"† dedicated to Duke John, which was completed by the first day of the new year.

* See Bret. II. p. 579. Melancthon relates that Luther got down from his waggon some distance from Erfurth, and entered the town on foot, to avoid the disagreeableness of a popular welcome. But, notwithstanding, in the evening, in the house of the curate of St. Michael's Church, with whom he lodged, he was overwhelmed with a tumultuous crowd of visitors.

† Von weltlicher Oberheit, wie weit man, &c.

In the course of the summer the Elector of Saxony took 1522.
his departure for Nuremberg, and from the period of his arrival there every peril which had menaced the Reformer seemed dispelled. Frederic became the animating spirit of the Council of Regency; and the favour with which the Council regarded Luther was quickly manifested by the evasive answer returned to the repeated complaints of Duke George, that "insults against the Pope and Emperor were resounding on all sides." And it cannot be questioned but recent events had thrown a lustre round the Reformer's name, which added materially to the popularity of his cause. He had appeared as a pacificator, when the smouldering heat of popular passions was rising into flame, and the tide of fanaticism had threatened to overwhelm all the landmarks of civilization; and it was difficult to decide, whether the self-devotedness with which he had quitted his retreat, and exposed himself to death from any hand that might raise itself against him, or the power of his influence, which, at his first word, had reduced chaos into order, the more enhanced his renown in the estimation of the public.

Leo X. was dead. The excess of his joy at the capture of Milan by the imperial forces had induced a fever, which had brought his pontificate to a sudden termination in November, 1521. His successor was elected on the 9th January in the following year—Adrian of Utrecht, Cardinal of Tortosa, who now became Adrian VI. The recommendation of Adrian to St. Peter's chair had been the favour in which the Emperor held him as his tutor, and as having faithfully served him in the Low Countries and in Spain; but he was a widely different person from Leo in his tastes and habits, an orthodox Dominican in his tenets, scrupulously conscientious and strict in his private morals, and full of the zeal of an inquisitor of heresy against every impugner of the infallible Church.

1522. Leaving his peaceful and pious Deanery at Louvain with regret, Adrian repaired to Rome in the August of 1522, consoling himself for the sacrifice which he had made of a secluded and studious life by the hope of accomplishing the resolution he had strenuously formed, to reform the debauched manners of the Roman Court, amend the morals of the clergy, and correct the multifarious abuses of the whole ecclesiastical system. He appointed Chieregati to represent him at the Diet, and wrote a letter to the Elector of Saxony, dated the 5th October, imploring him to discountenance all heresy, and "after the example of his ancestors, to consult the dignity of the Apostolic See, the safety and tranquillity of the whole Christian world, and to protect the holy faith." Frederic's reply, written by Melancthon, denied that he had ever espoused or defended Luther's cause, but required that the monk should be refuted by Scripture, as every other argument must be unavailing, and expressed his sincere desire for the establishment of God's truth, and the maintenance of the public peace. Proceeding with great zeal in the path on which he had entered, on the 25th November Adrian addressed a brief to the "Estates of the Sacred Roman Empire assembled at Nuremberg," summoning them to the defence of the Catholic faith, and reminding them that "the Omnipotent God had caused the earth to open and swallow up the schismatics Dathan and Abiram; that Peter, the Prince of Apostles, had struck Ananias and Sapphira with sudden death for lying against God; that pious Emperors of old time had removed the heretics Jovinian and Priscillian by the temporal sword; that St. Jerome had determined that the heretic Vigilantius should be delivered to destruction of the flesh, that his soul might be saved; that their own ancestors had put John Huss and Jerome of Prague to death, who now seemed risen from the dead in Martin Luther." But on entering Germany

Chieregati found that Pope Adrian's missive had been dic- 1522.
tated in entire ignorance of all that was passing in the hearts of the people to whose rulers it was addressed. As he raised his two fingers, after the usual manner, as a Cardinal of the Church, to bless the wayfarers, the populace, instead of bowing with humility to receive the apostolical benediction, imitated his gestures, or pointed the finger in ridicule at the Nuncio and his mule. When he reached Nuremberg, he found that free city all Lutheran. The chapel of the Hospital, the churches of the Augustines, resounded with the eloquence of scriptural truth, drunk in with eager ears by the town-people who thronged them. And when he made this liberty of preaching a subject of strong complaint to the Diet, and the Archduke Ferdinand and the Elector of Brandenburg aided his remonstrances, the former saying, that "he was there in the place of his brother the Emperor," he found that the bold reply of Planitz, the Saxon envoy, was received with signal approval,—"Your Highness is representative of the Emperor, only in conjunction with the Council of Regency, and under the laws of the Empire." And such ineffectual efforts to check the freedom of religious teaching only increased the boldness of the Lutheran preachers; for the town council of Nuremberg publicly declared their resolution to uphold the rights of their free city, and, if force should be used against the preachers, to repel force by force. And when Chieregati intimated his intention of apprehending the preachers by his own authority, in the Pontiff's name, the Archbishop of Mentz and others, in consternation at the idea of a popular insurrection, replied that the attempt to execute such a project would be the signal for them to leave the city without a moment's delay.

The instructions of Adrian to his Nuncio required him to

1522. make two important demands of the Diet: first, the execution of the Edict of Worms; and secondly, the establishment of an episcopal censorship. And to render the Diet the more disposed to accede to these demands, the Pope, with a well-intentioned candour, which Cardinal Soderini, and such members of the sacred college as knew the world well, and the Roman court still better, regarded as childish imbecility, professed his resolution to effect a universal reform of the Church. "We know," he said, "that for several years certain vices have crept into the Roman chair, abuses in religion, violations of law, in fine, perversion in everything: and the corruption has spread from the head to the members, from the Pontiff to the clergy. We are resolved to reform the Court of Rome; the whole world calls for it." The papal party blushed to have thus an acknowledgment under the Pontiff's own hand and seal, that the Lutheran complaints of ecclesiastical excesses and iniquities were the strict and patent truth. The fountain once unsealed, the waters welled out without check or hinderance. Noble after noble rose in the Diet; and, taking the Pontiff's confession as his text, illustrated its truth and force by enumerating the various injuries or insults which he had to charge against the Holy See: and the result of the intense indignation thus excited and kept alive, was the famous *Centum Gravamina*, a befitting chapter to the pontifical preface, a document which throws great light on the practices of the Roman Church, and a standing evidence of the imperative necessity for a thorough reformation. And it was stated that, "if prompt redress were not accorded, it would become the duty of the States to deliberate on some decisive method of putting a period to such flagrant wrongs."

In reference to the answer to be returned to the Nuncio's

demands, a committee was appointed to draw up a Report to 1522.
be submitted to the Diet. The most influential member of this committee was John von Schwarzenberg, the Hofmeister of Bamberg, a man of great ability, and a decided Lutheran. The Report accordingly placed in its foremost paragraph the Pontiff's own admission of grievous abuses extending throughout the whole ecclesiastical economy, and his promise to rectify such an unhappy state of things. Under such circumstances, it alleged that the execution of the Edict of Worms was an impossibility; instead of crushing heresy, such an attempt would only extend and perpetuate it, and would have the worst effect on the people, by inciting them to resist authority. It required the Pope to abolish annates, to carry out the concordats, and to remove grievances. For the extinction of schism, it demanded a General Council, to meet within the term of one year, in a neutral town, wherein not only members of the clergy, but also of the laity, should have a seat and voice, with full liberty of frank discussion on "godly, evangelical, and other generally profitable affairs." If these requirements were granted, the papal party were given to understand that Luther and his adherents would refrain from disturbing the public repose in the interval. With overflowing joy, on the 13th January, Planitz 1523.
forwarded this Report to the Elector of Saxony.

This Report was sanctioned by the Diet, with a few immaterial alterations, such as omission of the words which spoke of corruptions pervading all orders in the Church, and the omission of the word "evangelical," on the vehement objection of the Archbishop of Mentz. The discussion was now transferred to the conduct to be observed by the antagonist religious parties, in the interim, before the Council: and the Papists succeeded in carrying the vote that Luther and his associates should be interdicted from printing and publishing

1523. any writings,* and from everything calculated to interrupt the public peace. It remained to be determined what preaching should be tolerated from the pulpit. The Papists contended that the four Latin Fathers, Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, and Gregory, should be constituted the doctrinal standard conjointly with Scripture: the Lutherans insisted that Scripture alone should be made the rule of faith and teaching. At length a decision on the subject was agreed to, which satisfied both parties by the ambiguity of its language, that "nothing should be taught excepting the true, pure, sincere, and holy Gospel, and approved writings, piously, charitably, and christianly, according to the doctrine and exposition of writings approved and received by the Christian Church." And on the 6th March the Recess of the Diet was drawn up and published to this effect.

When this Recess was published, it became evident to the whole of Germany, and not least to those Papist members of the Diet, who had given their sanction to it, that a decided and momentous victory had been gained by the evangelical side. Luther himself at once recognised in it the superintending hand of Divine Providence, and was filled with joy and thankfulness. Throughout Germany, hearts yearning, like his own, for religious freedom, exulted in it as an earnest of the more complete triumph of their cause. And beyond Germany notes of congratulation from fellow Christians struggling against Rome greeted the success of their German brethren. "The Pope," Zwingle wrote, "has been routed, and almost clean expelled from Germany." On the other hand, the Nuncio made no secret of his disappointment and vexation; he renewed his demands for the execution of the Edict

* The Saxon envoy, however, protested that "his Prince could not consider himself bound by this prohibition, but should always know how to act in a Christian, praiseworthy, and irreproachable manner."

of Worms, and the establishment of an episcopal censorship; 1523.
but the Diet directed his attention to the *Centum Gravamina*, "which must be transmitted to his Holiness, and the fulfilment of his promise awaited."

Disappointed and chagrined, his own concessions turned into a weapon against him, Adrian directed his bitter wrath against the man to whom he imputed the defeat of his orthodox vengeance. He wrote a letter to the Elector of Saxony, in which he charged him with having "nourished the serpent in his bosom, who stained heaven and earth with his venom. It was due to the Elector that the churches were without congregations; the people without priests; the priests without reverence; and Christians without Christ. That faith was being abandoned which had been sucked in with the mother's milk. So silly and senseless had the Elector been as to believe one pigmy of humanity, covered with sins, rather than many renowned fathers of the Church, and so many universal councils. The Bible was a sealed book, which only the Lion of the tribe of Judah could open, and loose the seals thereof; and could he suppose that one carnal man, belching out wine and drunkenness, had more understanding in God's Word than so many spiritual fathers? Luther was continually inciting the laity to wash their hands in the blood of the priests. He taught that no satisfaction for sin was to be rendered to God; that fastings, prayers, and lamentations, were no redemption of guilt; that the body and blood of Jesus Christ ought not daily to be offered in sacrifice; that vows were not binding. He polluted the sacred utensils of God's house; he restored to the world, or rather to the devil, the virgins espoused to Christ; he united the priests of Christ to harlots; he derided the saints; and with foul mouth contradicted the Councils; under pretext of liberty he was labouring to introduce a licentious life,

1523. resembling that of the brutes; he branded not only the friars and priests, but even the successor of Peter, the vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, with names so impious and infamous, with contumelies, reproaches, and blasphemies so monstrous, that the modest tongue could not utter them, or a chaste ear bear the recital. He called that chair in which Peter the head of the Apostles had sat, whence sacerdotal unity had sprung, the seat of Antichrist; the Universities he called brothels, Sodoms and Gomorrahs. It was true that there were bad and wicked priests. But was any one exempted from honouring his parents, if they were wicked? Did not Christ command—'The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all, therefore, which they bid you, that observe and do.' But now, the temples and monasteries were burnt and profaned; the virgins dedicated to Christ, the priests and the monks, were cruelly persecuted, and the goods of the churches plundered; rapine, highway robbery, murder, conflagration produced universal confusion. O son, beloved in Christ, by the bowels of our Redeemer, by Christian unity, by the love of your country, by your hope of salvation, we implore you, pity your country, which, once sincerely submissive to the yoke of the Lord, now instead of blushing as it ought, boasts that Martin, the public enemy of faith and piety, is sprung from her bowels. Think of Dathan and Abiram, and of Corah; how Uzziah was struck with leprosy, because he ventured on the priest's office. Does not all history show that those have perished by the avenging hand of God by a miserable end, who have laid sacrilegious hands on the Lord's Christ; whilst prosperity and a long life have been the lot of those who have venerated Christ in his priests?" The letter concluded in fiercer accents. "Let it be your first business to see that that impure mouth be closed, that blasphemous tongue bridled; and if you will do this, as the angels in heaven

rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, so we will carry you as 1523.
the lost sheep found again, to the fold of the Lord with rejoicing. But if you disregard our paternal and wholesome admonition, we tell you in the name of God and of Jesus Christ—whose vicar on earth we are—that in this present world your crime shall not go unpunished, and hereafter eternal flames await you. The Pope Adrian, and the most religious Emperor Charles, his dearest son in Christ and pupil, whose edict against Luther you have dared to set at nought, are alive in the same age. Those whom the Pope Adrian, with Charles the Great, begot in the faith—the Pope Adrian, with the Emperor Charles, will not suffer to perish by the contagion of schism and heresy. Therefore, repent and return to your sober senses, you and your deluded Saxons, unless you would feel the sword of the Pope and the sword of the Emperor."

As he read such words, the peaceable Elector Frederic—who, when told that he might seize and possess himself of the town of Erfurth with the loss of only five men, had replied, "The loss of *one* would be too much,"—felt his breast glow with indignation, and anticipated the period when he might be called upon to defend with the sword his rights as an Elector of the Empire, and the cause of Christ. He therefore referred the Pope's brief to the consideration of the Apostles of the Reformation, and requested their judgment on the lawfulness of waging war in behalf of the Gospel in resistance to the Emperor. Luther, Link, Melancthon, Bugenhagen, and Amsdorf, met in conclave, and agreed unanimously upon the reply to be returned to this question. They answered that, first, a prince, in undertaking war, must be satisfied in his conscience that his cause was just: secondly, that he could only undertake war with the consent of his people, who had delegated to him his authority, and whom it was unjust to load with taxes; but that the people could not

1523. desire a war in defence of the Gospel, for they had no faith. Melancthon added as his private opinion that, thirdly, when the Jewish kings made war for God, it was by an express divine command; Christians, on the other hand, must not defend themselves or require others to defend them, but cheerfully pour out their lives for Christ.

Such an answer sufficiently marks that a great epoch had been reached in the progress of the Reformation. The link between Saxony and the Papacy had at last been torn asunder by the Pontiff himself: Lutheranism was beginning to take its stand as a recognised religious system; it had refused in its defence carnal weapons, and sought refuge with God only; and the public sympathy with the evangelical cause had been declared by the Nuremberg Recess. Casting his eyes around, Luther beheld on every side the marvellous growth and extension, unparalleled save in the earliest history of Christianity, of those scriptural principles in vindication of which he had nailed his famous Theses to the door of the Castle Church. In Sweden, under Gustavus Eric, in Norway and in Denmark, under Frederic of Holstein, the evangelical religion was becoming the national faith: along the Baltic and the North Seas, from Pomerania to the Netherlands, and inland from Hamburg to Vienna, the popular creed was Lutheran: in Switzerland a similar movement was daily gaining ground: and the seed had been wafted to other lands, which already afforded proofs that it could not remain without fruit. Such effects in a less space of time than six years showed the finger of God. And, so far, the progress of truth had been attended by no disaster. The attempts, public or private, to fetter its career, had added to its impetus: and even the efforts of fanaticism seemed to have been overruled for good, and to have enhanced the influence of the great Reformer.

Such is the outline which history gives of the achievements

of the Reformation at this period. Its prospects were so bright that, from the analogy of the past, it might fairly have been anticipated by a contemporary observer, that at no great distance of time the Roman faith would no longer exist, and the revived truths of Scripture would be professed by all Europe. But Luther himself was far from being thus misled by outside appearances. He was too deeply conversant with human nature, and looked below the surface to the under-current of motives. Hating, like Erasmus, all war, and believing that, in a Christian point of view, scarcely any circumstances can justify it, he had seen, with undissembled sorrow, the schemes of Hutten and the warlike party ripen into action, and Sickengen, with his adherents, enter the territories of the Archbishop of Treves, and invest his capital, nominally for the sake of vindicating the liberty of religious teaching,* but in reality to carry into execution his political designs. But this was, in Luther's apprehension, only the little cloud arising "like a man's hand" which foreboded still greater troubles. He foresaw that a terrible collision must soon ensue, of the angry passions of the multitude, using their spiritual professions to cloak their carnal ends, with the cruelty and tyranny of many princes and nobles, who were driving from their boundaries, or imprisoning, the evangelical preachers, and had interdicted the circulation of the New Testament. Since leaving the Wartburg, admonitions to peace had rarely been absent from his lips. With his love for playing on words, he told his Wittenberg congregation, that the name of their Elector, Frederic, meant *peaceable,* and answered to Solomon in the Hebrew, who had been a type of the Prince of Peace. Peace seemed to him the 1523.

* So Bucer wrote to Zwingle. See his letter, Zuing. Op. (Edit. Sculthess.) VII. p. 296.

1523. greatest blessing next to the Gospel of Christ. But he complained that the reproclamation of that Gospel had chiefly served to stir from its depths the wickedness of the human heart; that the people were willing enough to cease to be Papists, but very unwilling to become Christians; and with fear and trembling he besought on his knees God's pity and compassion for his country, on which he predicted that the vials of the Divine wrath would soon be poured out.

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