

CHAPTER XIII

THE DIET OF AUGSBURG (1530) AND LUTHER AT COBURG CASTLE

I. THE DIET OF AUGSBURG

Emperor Charles V was finally able to set out on his journey to Germany, for which the German Catholics had ardently longed. The treaty of Barcelona with the pope, and the treaty of Cambrai with Francis, king of France, had opened the way for him.

On January 21, 1530, shortly before his coronation as emperor, Charles published at Bologna the convocation of the imperial diet at Augsburg, in which he himself intended to take an active part. It was his wish that the diet should remove—peaceably, if possible—the grounds for the religious controversy which filled him with anxiety. It was the intention of this zealous Catholic ruler, sincerely to adopt the ways of kindness and to effect an arrangement by peaceful methods. For this reason the convocation adopted a conciliatory tone and assured the Protestants that they would be given a hearing.

The Emperor's brother, Ferdinand, journeyed to the Brenner in Tyrol, to meet Charles as the latter was coming from Italy. At Gries, on the northern declivity of the mountain, there is a monumental inscription marking the spot where the brothers embraced each other. Charles was depressed by Ferdinand's report of the existing conditions. Nevertheless, on June 15, the high-minded Emperor hopefully entered the city of Augsburg.

This ancient free city on the Lech, a flourishing center of art and commerce, still retained its venerable towered walls with moats and gates. Inside were the homes of the wealthy and comfortably situated patricians, and lofty, antique buildings, conspicuous among them the palace of the bishop and the splendid town-hall, where the sessions of the diet were to be held. Both have since been either replaced by other structures or completely remodeled. The banking house of the Fuggers, which had been established ten years before, still exists, a vivid reminder of the great commercial firm which once dominated inter-

national trade. The Fuggers remained loyal to the Catholic Church when the new religion established itself in the city.

Bishop Stadion of Augsburg, assisted by the Emperor and the Catholic estates who arrived for the diet, presided over the Corpus Christi procession which wended its way through the streets of the city, and was celebrated with a splendor never before witnessed. The Protestants ostentatiously kept aloof. As a consequence, the Emperor prohibited the preaching of Protestant sermons.

When the sessions of the diet were opened, on June 20, Luther's partisans succeeded in inducing the estates to deliberate on the religious question before devising ways and means of combating the Turkish menace, which Charles wished to be considered first of all. It was their plan to submit an extensive statement justifying their attitude on the religious question. Above all, it was their intention to procure protection for themselves and publicly to advance their efforts at propaganda. The so-called Augsburg Confession constituted a means to this end. The lengthy document had been written by the prudent and pliant Melanchthon, who at that time was very timorous, and had the approval of Luther, who during the sessions of the diet lived in the castle of Coburg, which was situated not far from Augsburg. The Confession was so drawn up as to speak not in the name of Luther or the theologians, but in that of the rulers who had adopted the new creed and by whom it was submitted. Originally, therefore, it was a confession of faith by the princes. Afterwards it became a symbolical document, *i. e.*, the official statement of the Lutheran creed. By means of this instrument, the princes intended to indicate through Melanchthon, their spokesman, the kind of religion they had thus far suffered to be preached within their territories. Melanchthon, whilst engaged in the composition of this document, had also intended it to serve as a refutation of a work of Dr. Eck, who had caused an exhaustive theological indictment of the new religious system, consisting of 404 articles, to be submitted to the Emperor before his arrival in Augsburg.

In order to procure a favorable decision on the part of the diet, the author of the "Confession" tried to show that in reality there were no great differences between the two camps. He proposes certain essentially Lutheran doctrines, but veils them in clever formulas devised to show that they coincide with what the Catholic Church had always held. The question which, according to him, is of prime import-

tance, is about abuses which in the general opinion of men ought to be abolished. In fact, the first official edition of the "Confession," printed in 1530, contained the deceptive declaration (which was subsequently altered) that the impugned doctrines meant no deviation from the Scriptures or the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, in as far as that teaching could be ascertained from Catholic authors.

The Emperor reluctantly consented to have the "Confession" publicly read in the presence of the estates. It was so read on June 25, not, however, during a regular session of the diet in the town-hall, but in a smaller Gothic hall of the episcopal palace. The twenty-eight articles were read in a stentorian voice by Baier, the Saxon chancellor, who designedly read the German version of the text so distinctly that it was audible through the open windows by those who lingered in the courtyard without.

On closer inspection, the Catholic theologians were compelled to marvel at the ingenuity with which a road to a pseudo-union with the ancient Church had been kept open. They noted the absence of any declaration relative to the pope, whom the Lutherans had come to regard as Antichrist. The declaration was silent about the universal priesthood of all the faithful in place of the clergy, the incapacity of the human will to do good, and absolute predestination, the very pillars of the doctrinal system of Lutheranism. The antitheses between the two religions on the subject of indulgences and Purgatory were likewise hushed up, and the differences in the veneration of the saints had also vanished.¹

Hence, honest candor, the preliminary condition of reunion, was missing.

Luther himself censured the omission of some of his doctrines. However, he did not wish to disavow the action of Melanchthon, his indispensable, industrious, and respected mediator. He averred that "he could not step as softly and quietly as he" (Melanchthon)² and regarded himself as incompetent to deliberate in such an assembly.

By order of the Emperor, Catholic theologians at once undertook

¹ *Corpus Ref.*, XXVI, p. 290. Luther also maintains: "*Audita nostrorum confessione primum communis vox et sententia omnium fuit, nos nihil docere contra ullum fidem articulum neque contra scripturam. . . .*" Letter to Joh. Brismann, November 7, 1530; *Briefwechsel*, VIII, p. 311.

² Letter of May 15, 1530, to the Elector John of Saxony; Erl. ed., Vol. LIV, p. 145 (*Briefwechsel*, VII, p. 335). In a letter to Jonas, July 21 (*Briefwechsel*, VIII, p. 133), Luther also says that the Confession conceals important doctrines.

to compose a refutation of the "Confession," in order to expose its errors as well as its vagueness and its omissions. In addition to Eck, Faber, and Cochlaeus, were some of the other Catholic apologists whom we have heretofore mentioned: Usingen, Dietenberger, Wimpina, etc. The opposition was officially asked whether they had any other articles they wished to defend besides those contained in the "Confession" which they had submitted. They replied evasively. The tone of the hastily composed Catholic "Confutatio" appeared too offensive to the Emperor and his advisers. It was revised and, after it had been cast into the form of an answer given by the Emperor, was read aloud on August 3 in the same hall in which the Protestants had been permitted to submit their "Confession."

The Emperor now ordered the Protestants to return to the pale of the Christian communion, which they had deserted, lest he be compelled to proceed against them in his capacity of "guardian and protector of the Church," which was his bounden duty as emperor. At that time Charles was actually inclined to resort to military force, but after October 30, in virtue of the representations of the Catholic estates, he became somewhat reconciled to the idea of a general council, not, however, until the time for waging a successful war had passed.³ The papal legate, Campeggio, was in favor of the strictest possible execution of the edict of Worms.

In a state of painful anxiety, Melanchthon approached Campeggio with proposals suggested by the delusive hope of coming to a mutually satisfactory agreement. While he shuddered at the thought of an open break, he did not wish to yield in principle, although many of the Catholic leaders hoped for his conversion on account of his conciliatory addresses. In the subsequent negotiations he became more and more a pitiable figure.⁴ His depressed condition of mind is the only thing that helps him over the charge of conscious deception. Many friends of the Lutheran cause were opposed to him and to any kind of approach between the two parties. Landgrave Philip of Hesse, to signify his protest, left Augsburg precipitately.

The negotiations which the Emperor had authorized between seven representatives of each faction proved fruitless. In vain did the

³ Cf. E. W. Mayer, *Forschungen zur Politik Karls V. während des Augsburger Reichstags* (*Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 1916, pp. 40 sqq.).

⁴ Grisar, *Melanchtons rätselhafte Nachgiebigkeit auf dem Augsburger Reichstag* (*Histor. Jahrbuch*, XLI [1921], pp. 257-267; *Luther-Analekten* VI). Cf. Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, pp. 383 sqq.

Catholic spokesmen, subject to papal approval, offer to have the lay-chalice introduced in the Protestant districts, or to tolerate the marriage of priests until the assembly of a general council. Every effort to restore peace failed in consequence of the inflexible attitude of Luther, who issued frequent letters from the castle of Coburg. Melanchthon indicated his willingness to have the jurisdiction of the bishops restored, but it was an insidious and ineffectual offer, because of the underlying presupposition that the bishops would have to give free scope to the new "gospel."⁵ A smaller commission thereupon undertook to effect an understanding. Its Catholic members were: Eck, Cochlaeus and Wimpina, but their efforts were futile.

In the meantime Melanchthon's tireless pen produced an "Apologia Confessionis Augustanae," which was directed against the Catholic "Confutatio." His party, however, did not succeed in having this "Apologia" publicly read. Upon his homeward return, the author privately published a Latin edition of it. The "Apologia," like the "Confession," was soon regarded by Protestants as a symbol of their faith.

Meantime the number of estates who declared their adherence to the Augsburg "Confession" constantly increased. The original signers were: Elector John of Saxony, Margrave George of Ansbach, Duke Ernest of Braunschweig-Lüneburg, Landgrave Philip of Hesse, and Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt. In addition to these names, the Latin copy of the "Augsburg Confession" contained those of John Frederick, heir to the throne of Electoral Saxony, and Duke Francis of Braunschweig-Lüneburg. Nuremberg and Reutlingen were the only cities to subscribe. Four cities which professed Zwinglianism, namely, Strasburg, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau, submitted a separate profession of faith, composed by Bucer and Capito; it was called "Confessio Tetrapolitana." Other cities of Upper Germany, though favoring the Reformation, kept aloof. In the course of the deliberations at the diet of Augsburg a better understanding was effected between the Lutherans and the Upper Germans with respect

⁵ Wilhelm Walther, *Für Luther*, p. 434: "Melanchthon was only too ready to acquiesce in equivocal formulas and to make concessions which in truth could not be harmonized with the 'reservation that nothing may be conceded which contradicts the Gospel'; a reservation which was constantly repeated." The Protestant historian A. Berger (*Luther in kulturgeschichtlicher Darstellung* (1889), Vol. II, I; pp. 226 sq.) notes the weak attitude of Melanchthon and says that, "objectively considered," it was "a betrayal of the Protestant conscience."

to the Augsburg Confession, although Article X of the Confession was supposed to be directed against Zwingli. Bucer was a smooth politician and knew how to surmount the difficulties arising from that document. After several of the cities represented in the diet had accepted the Confession, Strasburg also declared its adherence at a conference which was held towards the end of December, 1530, at Schmalkalden. Thus everything conspired towards the creation of the fateful League named after that city.

The Protestant leaders at the diet of Augsburg used the new evangel as the basis of a political alliance designed to divide Germany. Before his departure, the Landgrave of Hesse threateningly declared that if he had to die for the faith, certain leaders of the opposition would die with him.

After some delay, due partly to the Turkish menace and partly to his own scruples, Emperor Charles issued a decree prohibiting all theological innovations. The Protestants were ordered to accept the articles upon which no agreement had been reached, by the fifteenth of April of the next year, at the very latest. They vociferously objected to this and at the same time refused to consent to the required intervention against the German Zwinglians and the danger to the Empire caused by them and by Zwingli at Zurich. Nevertheless, the Emperor, in his *Reichstagsabschied* of November 19, renewed the edict of Worms with its severe measures, but at the same time referred the litigants to the coming ecumenical council, which was expected within a year.⁶

Both the renewal of the edict of Worms as well as the Emperor's reference to the expected convocation of a general council proved ineffectual. The edict could not be enforced because of the united front of the opposition, and the council was postponed by Pope Clement VII because of the fear that schisms would develop among the faithful, because of the expectation of small benefit to those who had separated from the Church, and, still more, because of the political difficulties in the way of holding a council.

Thus the diet of Augsburg, which had been hailed with such great expectations by the Catholics, due principally to the obstinate attitude of the Protestants, in a certain measure furthered the unfortunate schism. On December 12, Luther gloatingly reminded his elector that the schemes of men "always turn out differently than expected, so that one must say: I surely did not intend that. Pope and Emperor did not

⁶ Cf. Janssen-Pastor, III, pp. 251 sqq.; Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, p. 384.

succeed at Augsburg as they expected; nor shall they succeed henceforth." He imagines that his party is sustained by God and will "remain with God."⁷

Nothing illustrates Luther's way of thinking and proceeding more graphically than a close scrutiny of his behavior during his sojourn in the lonely castle of Coburg at the time of the diet of Augsburg.

2. LUTHER IN THE CASTLE OF COBURG

The ancient castle of Coburg rises above the city of the same name on the south side of the Thuringian Forest, in the midst of attractive rows of hills. A road, rising gently at first, but soon growing steeper, leads up to the castle, which once upon a time was rightly styled "Frankish Crown." Even to-day the visitor beholds in it the best type of the massive, crown-like castle of the Middle Ages, simply yet magnificently constructed.

During the diet of Augsburg, Luther resided in the topmost portion of the edifice, reserved for princes. His suite is still extant. As he walked upon the detached so-called High Bastion on the side of the courtyard, he had an unobstructed and charming view of the splendid landscape in the direction of the city where the fate of his theological system appeared to be at issue. As an outlaw, Luther could not enter Augsburg; therefore the Elector of Saxony, who owned this castle, had assigned it to him for a residence, whence he could easily correspond with his representatives at the diet.

This lonely and almost unoccupied castle became a "Sinai" and a "hermitage" to him. In his first correspondence "from the kingdom of the jackdaws" he humorously describes the antics of the birds about his lofty room, comparing them with the garrulous and agitated assembly at Augsburg. Good humor, he says, was necessary to "repulse the heavy thoughts which rushed in upon him, so far as they permitted themselves to be banished."⁸

The thoughts which occupied his mind during well-nigh the entire time of his sojourn at the castle of Coburg, and which often tortured him, not only concerned the diet; he was afflicted by deep anxiety

⁷ Erl. ed., Vol. LIV, p. 201 (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. VIII, p. 331).

⁸ Köstlin-Kawerau, *M. Luther*, Vol. II, p. 196.

regarding the Turkish menace to Germany, no less than by interior "temptations" against his teaching.

Luther arrived at Coburg on April 15, 1530, and remained in the castle up to October 5. Aside from the inevitable visitors, his only company consisted of a young pupil, Master Vitus Dietrich, and a nephew, Cyriac Kaufmann, a student at Wittenberg.

The first task which he undertook to discharge was the composition of a violent pamphlet by which he intended to intimidate the clerical members of the diet. It appeared under the title: "A Warning to the Clergy assembled at the Diet of Augsburg."⁹ With passionate exaggeration he reproaches them on account of their immoral lives, the abuses in the government of the Church, and eulogizes the Reformation. He threatens them with revolution if they obstruct his gospel. In terrifying words he calls out to the assembly: "Alive, I am your plague; dying, I am your death; for God has instigated me against you. I must be unto you, as Osee says (XIII, 7 sq.), a bear and a lion in the way of Assur. Ye shall have no peace before my name, until you amend your ways or perish."

Then he worked on his translation of the Bible, especially Jeremias and Ezechiel. Whilst engaged in the study of Jeremias, his soul was overcome by a profoundly mystical mood. He was captivated by the prophecy concerning Gog and Magog, whose names pertained to the most remote and barbarous period of paganism, and were connected with the destruction within the kingdom of God. Luther interpreted the prophecy as signifying the devastating incursion of the Turks. He published this interpretation in a special work immediately after the publication of his "Warning to the Clergy."¹⁰ From the Psalter, with which he also occupied himself, he next selected for publication, under the title, "The Beautiful Confitemini," his interpretation of Psalm 117 (Vulgate), which he held in great esteem.¹¹ It is the Psalm which the Breviary prescribes for recitation on Sunday, beginning with "*Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus. . . . Dicat nunc Israel,*" etc. Luther was wont to apply this Psalm to his dangers and his confidence in

⁹ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, II, pp. 268 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XXIV, 2nd ed., p. 356.

¹⁰ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, II, pp. 223 sqq.; Erl. ed., XLI, pp. 220 sq. In this little tract, Luther, under the influence of a strong illusion, claims that the Turks had special designs against him and his little band of followers, but Christ, according to the prophecy, will destroy both pope and Turk, "with His splendid advent, which we daily expect."

¹¹ Weimar ed., Vol. XXXI, I, pp. 65 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XLI, pp. 1 sqq.

salvation, the latter especially because of the passage: "I shall not die, but live: and shall declare the works of the Lord." In order to relieve himself in his physical and mental sufferings he inscribed these words with musical notations on the wall of his room at Coburg castle, where they were seen by the physician Ratzeberger twenty years afterwards.

Later, his anxiety concerning the Augsburg diet once more set his pen in motion. He published an "Open Letter" to Archbishop Albrecht of Mayence, who, as yet, was not sufficiently pliable to suit Luther, but took a conciliatory attitude.¹² In terms far milder than those of his "Warning," he demands that, since it was impossible for them to unite, the rival religious parties be unmolested in their respective professions of faith.

In consequence of physical and mental ailments, his literary labors became more and more difficult. His afflictions were partly a result of nervous over-excitement, and partly an effect of the hasty and impassioned labors which he performed. He had not been well even before he left Wittenberg. Beginning with the end of January, 1529, his melancholia was aggravated at times by violent spells of dizziness and a ringing noise in the head. On January 1, 1530, he said in a sermon at Wittenberg that he would not ascend the pulpit any more because of his disgust at the indifference of the people towards the Word of God. According to a remark of the editor of the sermon in the Weimar Edition, this declaration admits that "the only possible explanation of this step is a pathological one."¹³ In May he found it impossible to work for weeks at a time on account of buzzing sensations which he described as "thunder in the head," and a tendency to swoon.¹⁴

He assigned the cause of his afflictions to the devil, who enlivened Luther's imagination with peculiar images during his sojourn at Coburg. The ex-monk firmly believed in the Satanic apparitions and effects which were reported to him at that time. Thus he declared that he had seen a large host of mysterious spirits, who, coming from Cologne, caused themselves to be carried across the river at Spires and marched towards Augsburg to attend the diet. "They were evil spirits,

¹² Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, ii, p. 397; Erl. ed., Vol. LIV, pp. 159 sqq. (*Briefwechsel*, VIII, pp. 84 sqq.).

¹³ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. VI, p. 168.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 99 sqq.

devils in disguise." Melanchthon regarded them as omens of a "terrible revolution," and his son-in-law, George Sabinus, described the apparitions in poetical form. Luther afterwards defied the wrath of these spirits by exclaiming: "Let them have their way—those spectre-monks of Spires!"¹⁵ Luther avidly accepted the report of Bugenhagen, who wrote from Lübeck at the time that the devil had testified for the new gospel through the medium of a maiden who was possessed by him. "The cunning demon," he wrote, "designs prodigies."¹⁶

Concerning himself, he complains in a letter to Melanchthon (May 12, 1530) that when he was alone (Dietrich and Kaufmann being absent) the devil sent "his messenger" to him and so overpowered him with gloomy thoughts that he was driven out of his room and forced to seek other companions. "I can hardly await the day," he adds in a characteristic phrase, "when we shall see the great power of this spirit and, as it were, his almost divine majesty."¹⁷

At Coburg he saw the devil in a phantastic visual illusion. About nine o'clock, on the evening of a rainy day in June, as he stood at his window and looked out over the little forest near by, as Vitus Dietrich bears witness, he saw "a fiery, flaming serpent, which, after twisting and writhing about, dropped from the roof of the nearest tower down into the wood. He at once called me and wanted to show me the ghost (*spectrum*), as I stood by his shoulder. But suddenly he saw it disappear. Shortly after, we both saw the apparition again. It had, however, altered its shape, and now looked more like a great flaming star lying in the field, so that we were able to distinguish it plainly, even though the weather was rainy."¹⁸ In his fright, Luther regarded the apparition as the devil. It may have been one of the inmates of the castle passing by with a torch or a brightly shining lantern which cast a reflexion on the roof, the woods and field. Whoever visits the place will at once perceive that this is a plausible explanation. Luther, however, was so sure he had seen the devil that he mentioned it in the following year to those who were present to aid him in the revision of his German translation of the Psalms. He said: "I saw my devil flying over the wood at Coburg," adding that Psalm 18 (Vulg. 17), verse

¹⁵ Cfr. Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, p. 387; Vol. VI, p. 209.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 410 sq.

¹⁷ *Briefwechsel*, VII, p. 332: "*Habuit Satan legationem suam apud me.*" He is eager to see his plane *divina majestas*.

¹⁸ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. VI, p. 130.

15, which they were just then discussing, speaks of a *materia ignita*.¹⁹

His morbid fancy was followed by an unusually violent buzzing in the head and an increased tendency to faintness in the succeeding night—symptoms which indicated that his nervousness had reached a crisis. To young Dietrich this was but a new proof that all the ailments of his master were caused by the devil who had just appeared to them. It is not surprising that a blotch of ink on the wall of the room which Luther occupied in this castle was later attributed to Old Nick, just as the legendary one in the Wartburg.²⁰ Outside of this case, we know of no other manifestation of the evil spirit to Luther.

Luther himself tells us many details of the spiritual “temptations” to which he was subject at this time. He compares his soul, assailed by temptations, to a land dried up by heat and wind and thirsting for water.²¹ He says that he is far stronger in his public controversies than in these personal struggles.²² To Melanchthon he writes that he would rather endure this torture of the body than “that hangman of the spirit who . . . will never stop until he has gobbled me up.”²³ After his return to Wittenberg, he recalled these spiritual struggles with horror. He was but forty-seven when he wrote to Amsdorf: “I now am really beginning to feel the weight of my years, and my powers are going. The angel of Satan [2 Cor. XII, 7] has indeed dealt hardly with me.”²⁴ On another occasion he said to Dietrich at the Coburg, if he were to die (he had already selected a place for his grave), and his body were cut open, his heart would be found all shrivelled up “in consequence of my distress and sadness of spirit.”²⁵

These well-attested spiritual agonies of the ex-monk, which were naturally accompanied by qualms of conscience, stand in striking contrast to the narratives of most Protestant biographers, who laud the spiritual repose, the interior joy, and unflinching faith of Luther in the days which he spent in the castle of Coburg. It is true that when storms assailed him he constantly sought comfort in the idea that his restlessness was attributable to the devil and that he finally overcame his scruples with increased defiance.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 96.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 390, and Vol. V, p. 346.

²² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 390.

²³ *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 347.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 348.

At that time he advised one of his pupils, Jerome Weller, how to conduct himself when assailed by "temptations." The latter was tormented by great fear as to the forgiveness of his sins and the spiritual condition of his soul.²⁶ Luther assures him that he also had such temptations, which were caused by the devil, who insidiously persecutes us on account of our belief and trust in Christ. Hence, when tempted "to despair and blaspheme," one should disregard the temptation as much as possible. Avoid being alone, he advises him; jest with my wife, imbibe somewhat more freely. Such temptations are useful. By means of them he himself had become "a great doctor." Moreover, Weller should not fear on account of minor moral infractions. When thus afflicted, "some kind of sin should be committed," in order to manifest one's hatred and contempt for the devil. If the devil tempt me, he should "know that I acknowledge no sin and hold myself guiltless. The Ten Commandments, with which the devil afflicts and tortures us so much," ought to be removed from our sight and our mind. Satan is simply to be referred to our Saviour, the Son of God.²⁷

In this strange letter Luther also recalls his monastic days. It is possible that, in the lonely life which he led in the castle of Coburg, his monastic past may have impressed itself upon him more forcibly in contrast with his present career; just as, during his seclusion at the Wartburg, he was similarly impressed with the significance of his monastic vows. In his letter to young Weller, he refers to the fearful and terrible thoughts (*horrificae et terrificae cogitationes*) with which he was tortured while a monk.

He persuaded himself more and more that the feeling of depression which he had experienced in the monastery was entirely a result of his observance of the Catholic doctrine of virtue and merit. He now held that a doctrine which makes piety dependent upon meritorious works, instead of on faith alone, was unable to give peace, but could only engender misery and fear in the soul. It was only after he had discovered his new Gospel that the way of interior peace opened to him.

This is Luther's legendary version of his monastic life, an interpretation of his youthful experience made in after years. It is a weapon which after his sojourn at the castle of Coburg he began to use with predilection in his fight upon the ancient Church.²⁸

²⁶ In July (?), 1530; *Briefwechsel*, VIII, pp. 159 sqq. Cf. the letter to the same, dated August 15, 1530; *ibid.*, p. 188.

²⁷ "Nonnunquam largius bibendum, ludandum, nugandum, atque adeo peccatum aliquod faciendum in odium et contemptum diaboli. Utinam possem aliquid insigne peccati designare modo ad eludendum diabolum, ut intelligeret, me nullum peccatum agnosceret ac me nullius peccati mihi esse conscientum."

²⁸ For additional details see Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. VI, pp. 187 sqq.

Formerly he had hardly made this charge; but now he claims to have been a pious monk, "one of the best," according to the Catholic ideal—a monk who languished unto death in the performance of the works of papism, with its fasting, vigils, freezing, etc.; and if ever anyone entered Heaven by such "monkish" practices, he, too, had been determined thus to get there.²⁹ Hence, even if he was driven to despair in consequence of it, he was well acquainted by personal experience with the "over-sweetened infernal poison cake" and the untenableness of the Catholic doctrine of good works, which is sure to make all men as unhappy as he had been in the monastery.

In making these charges he fails to take into consideration that the unhappy state in which he found himself after his apostasy was not a result of the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church, but rather a product of his own over-wrought and sickly condition; that a contributory cause was his willfulness, as opposed to the discreet spirit of the rule and the direction of his religious superiors; and that thousands have attained to the greatest interior happiness by the conscientious observance of the Evangelical Counsels and the performance of good works.

The false notion referred to crops out in the writings which he issued from the castle of Coburg. Thus he says: "If a conscience is intent upon its works and builds on them, it is erected upon loose sand; it is ever slipping and sliding away; it must ever be seeking for works, for one and then for another, and ever more and more, until at last even the dead are clad in monks' cowls, the better to reach Heaven." However, by means of his new doctrine, he had prevented this calamity.³⁰ The legend of the emancipated holy monk Martin is utilized after his return to Wittenberg in the sermons which he commenced to preach in 1530 on chapters VI to VIII of St. John's Gospel, where he says that he had "mortified and tortured" himself like others, nay, even more than they, and accomplished thereby only this, that while "one of the best" of monks, he was in despair and so far removed from the faith that he "would have been ashamed to assert that Christ was the Redeemer." The papacy did not want a Redeemer, but wished to achieve redemption by means of its works.

Improbable though it was, this legend of Luther's monastic experience became increasingly prominent up to the close of his life, when it grew still more pronounced, and imposed itself upon countless thousands. It is still widely believed to-day.

Besides the tribulations which filled the soul of Luther during his abode in the castle of Coburg, the death of his aged father depressed him greatly. Hans Luther departed this life on May 29, "strong in

²⁹ Köstlin-Kawerau, *M. Luther*, Vol. II, p. 305.

³⁰ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. VI, p. 230.

his faith in Christ," as Martin learned.³¹ The news of his father's illness having been communicated to him, he addressed a consolatory letter to him from Wittenberg in the middle of February. Gladly, he writes, would he have visited him, had the journey not been fraught with such grave peril to himself; "peasants and princes" were opposed to him, and he did not dare "to tempt God by exposing himself to danger."³² Yet it was only a matter of a short journey within the territory of the Elector. The words quoted testify to the isolation in which this once popular man now found himself. After the Peasants' War his popularity had waned. Many of the lower classes regarded him as their oppressor, while the upper classes were largely at war with him because they had enriched themselves by robbing the Church.³³ But more of this anon.

3. THE "PROVISO OF THE GOSPEL"

Luther learned with satisfaction that the Augsburg Confession had been read in the presence of the estates of the Empire. But he did not share Melanchthon's expectation that it would lead to some sort of reunion. His opinion was that rejection was the only thing to be expected from the "obduracy" of his enemies. He would "not allow himself to be discouraged, no matter what the course of events" at Augsburg might be, he declared to Melanchthon.³⁴

In addition to the latter, Jonas, Agricola, Spalatin, Brenz, and others were active in promoting Luther's cause. It was to them and to Melanchthon that he wrote: "If we fall, Christ, the Ruler of the world, falls with us."³⁵ The Emperor, though well-intentioned, is unable to prevail against so many devils. Should he, however, "take a stand against the plain Scriptures or the Word of God," his decision cannot bind us.³⁶ There can be no question of restoring the property of the Church. It would be an advantage for his partisans to demand a council, since the demand could not be satisfied.

At the beginning of the negotiations proposed by Melanchthon, which at first concerned external matters only, Luther declared him-

³¹ Köstlin-Kawerau, *M. Luther*, Vol. II, p. 209.

³² February 15, 1530; Erl. ed., Vol. LIV, p. 130 (*Briefwechsel*, VII, p. 230).

³³ On Luther's declining popularity, cf. Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. VI, pp. 75 sqq.

³⁴ On June 29; *Briefwechsel*, VIII, p. 43.

³⁵ On June 30; *ibid.*, p. 51.

³⁶ Cf. Köstlin-Kawerau, *M. Luther*, Vol. II, pp. 216 sq., 225.

self in favor of declining all concessions contrary to the Gospel, and demanded courage and perseverance on the part of his representatives. He would prefer—thus he wrote on July 15—that they should depart for home. "Ever and anon homeward, always homeward," is his watch-word.³⁷ His letters to the Elector John of Saxony also demonstrate his negative attitude.

Under date of August 26, he writes a curious letter to Melanchthon. He encourages his pusillanimous friend, whom he always treated with great indulgence, in his ambiguous proposals: "I am certain that you will be unable to commit aught, except at the utmost a personal offense against me, so that we shall be charged with perfidy and vacillation. But what will the consequence be? Matters may easily be remedied by the steadfastness and the truth of our cause. True, I do not wish that it should so happen; but speak in such wise that, if it should happen, despondency do not ensue. For, once we shall have attained peace and escaped violence, we shall easily make amends for our tricks (lies) and failings, because God's mercy rules over us. 'Do manfully, and let your heart take courage, all ye who wait for the Lord' (Psalm XXVI, 14)." Later editions have omitted the word "lies" (*mendacia*) which appeared in brackets between "tricks" and "failings." The textual tradition, however, renders it probable that the deleted word appeared in the original, which is lost. But even if it had not appeared there, Luther's mind is sufficiently expressed by the words "tricks" and "failings" (*doli et lapsus*).³⁸

His strictures grow more severe in course of the following month, especially when, on September 20, he receives reports from the Nuremberg representatives at the Augsburg diet, bitterly complaining of Melanchthon's obsequiousness. "I am actually bursting with anger and indignation," he wrote to Jonas on this occasion. "I beseech you to cut the matter short and come back home." "They have our Confession and the gospel . . . If war is to come, then let it come. We have done and prayed enough. The Lord has given them over to us as a holocaust 'to reward them according to their works' [2 Tim. IV, 14]; us, His people, He will save from the fiery furnace of Babylon. . . . What I have written for you is meant for all."³⁹

³⁷ Letter to Jonas, etc.; *Briefwechsel*, VIII, p. 113.

³⁸ On August 28; *Briefwechsel*, VIII, p. 235. For more details on this letter, see my article on the same in the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, 1913, No. 3, pp. 286 sqq.

³⁹ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, p. 391.

Writing to his friend Link, he expresses the hope that no definite concessions will be made to the opposition; Christ will transform all offers "into a lance by which to play a deceptive game with the opponents who intend to play us false; Christ is preparing their destruction in the Red Sea."⁴⁰

In a more considerate tone he pleads with Melanchthon, who is burdened with so many cares, to furnish him with more accurate information; for he fears that he will be made a victim of violence and deception.

In order to console Spengler, his informant from Nuremberg, who had indulged in laments, he wrote to him: "Though Christ may appear to be somewhat weak, this does not mean that He is pushed out of His seat. . . . In the proviso concerning the Gospel, there are embodied snares (*insidiae*) other than those which our adversaries can employ against us."⁴¹ Hence, in the last analysis, the proviso concerning the Gospel and its secret snares (*insidiae*) was expected to save everything. This means: No agreement may be regarded as valid or binding if it runs counter to the new gospel, even though such concessions are made.

In the meantime events at Augsburg followed the course we have already described.

The greatest sensation was produced by Melanchthon's concession to recognize the jurisdiction of the bishops under certain conditions.

In treating of this proposal, Luther, on September 23, writes to his confidant, Nicholas Hausmann, to the effect that the main condition for the recognition of episcopal jurisdiction was this, that the bishops "were to attend to the teaching of the Gospel"; and he adds in all seriousness that nothing had been done in this direction and hence his enemies had conjured up their own destruction.⁴² He speaks as if the concession was not a mere pretense.

Still more characteristic is Luther's excuse after the close of the diet, addressed to Landgrave Philip of Hesse in response to the latter's complaint. Here he frankly admits the true nature of the proposed recognition of episcopal jurisdiction: It was not at all to be feared that this proposal would be accepted; moreover, it never could have been accepted; but, he avers, it served "to raise our repute still

⁴⁰ Köstlin-Kawerau, *M. Luther*, Vol. II, p. 237.

⁴¹ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, p. 385.

⁴² *Briefwechsel*, VIII, p. 269; Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, pp. 387 sq.

further" (*i. e.*, to capture public opinion). The offer would have been a mistake only if it had been adopted. Philip, therefore, ought to be satisfied; in his next work, he (Luther) proposes to discuss at length the unfairness of his opponents.⁴³ In this work, entitled "Warning," he actually boasts of the conciliatory attitude of his partisans at Augsburg. Nevertheless, all peace overtures were lost upon those obstinate men. "Our offers, our prayers, our cries for peace" were all wasted.⁴⁴

The real nature of the "proviso of the Gospel" is revealed only if due consideration is given to all these texts.

Towards the end of his sojourn at the castle of Coburg, Luther was visited by Martin Bucer and John Frederick, the son and future successor of the Elector of Saxony. Both found him in comparatively good health. His exterior appearance had changed, due to a long beard which he wore until his return to Wittenberg. Bucer's object was to effect an approach between his party, which sympathized with Zwingli, and Luther, relative to the controversy on the Eucharist.

He by his artful diplomacy succeeded in impressing Luther favorably by means of a vague formula on the Real Presence. After the termination of the diet, Luther probably hoped to resist the Emperor with a more numerous and more compact following. Prince John Frederick, eager to show his respects to Luther, presented him with a precious signet-ring bearing the latter's "escutcheon,"—a heart overlayed with a cross in the midst of a rose. Luther at once found a mystical interpretation for this symbol, by referring it to his doctrine and position.

With a certain resignation he discussed with these and other callers the unfavorable decision of the diet. In reality, and as a matter of course, he did not expect and could not have expected any other.

In his letters he now entrusted everything to Providence. His letters and writings at this period contain pious and beautiful sentiments and abound in phrases calculated to console himself and his friends.

Some historians love to extol the excellence of the prayers which he composed during his solitude. Among others they refer to a collection of exhortations which he compiled at that time. It is, in reality, a treasury of elevating thoughts, taken from Holy Writ to arouse confidence in God.⁴⁵ It is apparent at once, however, that all the texts

⁴³ *Briefwechsel*, VIII, p. 295; Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, p. 388.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 388-389.

⁴⁵ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, ii, pp. 700 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XXIII, pp. 154 sq. Cf. Haussleiter in the *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 1917, pp. 149 sqq.

have been selected to serve as a defense and confirmation of the personal standpoint which Luther assumed in his contentions. The same is true of most of his prayers. They are designed to corroborate his presumptive right. Every true prayer ought to contain, above all else, a petition to know and bow before the will of God, even as related to the whole conception of life. In the prayers which Luther composed such willingness is hardly detectable. He will not concede the possibility that another course besides the one which he has entered upon may be the right one.

This observation is applicable also to the frequently cited prayer which Vitus Dietrich is supposed to have heard from Luther's lips, and which culminates in the words addressed to God: "Thou hast power to extirpate the persecutors of Thy children; if Thou dost not do it, the danger is Thine. What we have done, we had to do."⁴⁶ Such is not the spirit of resignation as expressed in the *fiat voluntas tua*, the basis and crown of all prayer; but it is a command addressed to God to do the bidding of the supplicant. Dietrich, who was an enthusiastic disciple, also tells us that Luther, while sojourning in the castle of Coburg, devoted at least three hours daily to prayer. It is not unlikely that many an hour may have been spent by him in sighing for relief, especially when he was unfit for work and in periods of protracted sickness and spiritual affliction. Moreover, his work of translation undoubtedly offered him many opportunities of meditating on the Psalms and other Biblical texts. Hence, it is probable that his customary prayer may have often been protracted. But it is difficult to believe that Luther devoted himself regularly to prayers for more than three hours daily. The strenuous literary work which he performed demanded a most diligent use of time.

4. LUTHER'S WRITINGS DURING HIS SOJOURN AT COBURG AND THE FOLLOWING MONTHS

Some of the works produced by Luther's tireless pen during this period have already been mentioned.

Among the others, which are to be classed with them, his treatise on Purgatory should be noted.⁴⁷ It was written by Luther to supply

⁴⁶ Cfr. Grisar, *Luther*, original German ed., Vol. III, p. 998.

⁴⁷ "Widerruf vom Fegefeuer," Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, ii, pp. 367 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XXXI, pp. 184 sqq.

the absence of any reference to this subject in the Augsburg Confession, and to disclose all the disgraceful lies and atrocities of this papistical doctrine which, he asserted, had been introduced allegedly for the sake of filthy lucre.

Simultaneously with this work he published a tract in German and Latin, entitled, "Some Articles which Martin Luther will uphold against the entire School of Satan."⁴⁸ It comprises forty theses, which had been occasioned by the negotiations at Augsburg. Of these, no less than ten are an attempt to demonstrate the astounding proposition that the marriage of priests is to be regarded as a Christian institution even according to the papists, and that those who inveigh against it, therefore, deserve to be branded as "public assassins, robbers, traitors, liars and miscreants."

The book "On the Keys," to which Luther devoted himself immediately after, and which he rewrote twice, was his most important work on the power of the Church.⁴⁹ He teaches here that sins are not remitted by the Church in virtue of an (imaginary) power of the keys, but by the word of grace entrusted to the congregation, of which each individual avails himself in faith. If sins are to be retained instead of forgiven, the congregation must co-operate; it must be the "co-judge"; and hence, for the sake of discipline, sinners must be properly denounced. It was an exaggerated and impracticable demand, as he himself experienced in his several attempts to introduce the ban.⁵⁰

The "Epistle of M. Luther on Translation and on the Intercession of the Saints"⁵¹ in its first and longer section is a defense of the principles followed by him in translating the Bible. Among other things, he undertakes to formulate an extensive justification of his arbitrary insertion of the word "alone" in Rom. III, 28: "For we account a man to be justified by faith ALONE, without the works of the law." The Catholics severely criticized him for inserting the word "alone" in the interests of his doctrine. It was intended to strengthen the Lutheran position, though it must be admitted that the legitimate meaning of the text, as preserved by tradition, is not exactly incompatible

⁴⁸ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, ii, pp. 420 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XXXI, pp. 121 sqq.

⁴⁹ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, ii, pp. 435 sqq. Erl. ed., Vol. XXXI, pp. 126 sqq.

⁵⁰ Köstlin-Kawerau, *M. Luther*, II, p. 223: "Luther adheres to this, although he knew how difficult it was to establish ecclesiastical discipline according to this principle in the new evangelical churches."

⁵¹ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, ii, pp. 632 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. LXV, pp. 102 sqq.

with the word "alone." Luther insists most vigorously upon his interpolation. "I will not have either the pope-ass or a mule for judge." "I would not answer such asses, nor reply to their vain, monotonous babbling about the word *sola*, otherwise than to say: Luther will have it so and says, he is a doctor superior to all other doctors in all popedom. Thus shall it be." With an appearance of humor and a high sense of superiority he repeats that, if there be any "papist who would make himself obnoxious on account of the word *sola*," he "should be told straightway that Dr. Martin Luther will have it so. . . . *Sic volo, sic iubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas.*" He would also "rail and boast for once against the blockheads, as St. Paul did against his crazy saints" (2 Cor. XI, 21 sqq.), etc.⁵² Only an abnormal person with a deep-seated grudge could write in this manner. Apart from this, the treatise here under review contains many good suggestions, in particular concerning the task which he proposed to himself of faithfully reproducing, in conformity with the genius of the German language, the ideas of the sacred writer rather than their material words.

The second part, which attacks the Catholic doctrine of the invocation and veneration of saints as a "shameless lie of the pope-ass," constitutes but a loose appendix to this queer "Epistle." Luther incidentally admits that "it has been immeasurably painful" to him to have "torn" himself away from the saints. He is well aware that the veneration of the saints is an ancient heirloom "of all Christendom."

Another literary product of his sojourn at Coburg Castle bears the title, "Admonition relative to the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ." Besides piously exhorting the evangelicals, it attacks the doctrine of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as upheld by the Catholics at Augsburg.⁵³

By means of his work, "That Children Should be Urged to Attend School,"⁵⁴ Luther designed to remove a drawback which vexed him very much in connection with the appointment of pastors.

As early as 1524 he had discussed this matter in his "Appeal to the Aldermen of all Cities." In consequence of the religious contentions and the social revolution, the schools had deteriorated very much. He now laments

⁵² For further details see Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. V, pp. 515 sqq.

⁵³ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, ii, pp. 595 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XXIII, pp. 162 sqq.

⁵⁴ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, ii, pp. 517 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XVII, 2 ed., p. 377 sqq. Cf. my article on "Luther" in the *Pädagogisches Lexikon* of Roloff.

and fears that eventually there will be no fit candidates available for the pastoral office, as a consequence of which there will be but one pastor to every ten villages. The decline of the schools would likewise prove dangerous to the secular offices. The proposals which he develops for the education of youth are good; but here again he treats the Catholic schools of the past with flagrant injustice. According to Frederick Paulsen, author of a "Geschichte des Gelehrten Unterrichts," he regards the "entire basis of artistic education," as given before his time, as "the work of the devil."⁵⁵ Education, he claims, ought to be founded exclusively on the Gospel.

The civil authorities are systematically invited in this work to exert pressure upon parents who are remiss in the discharge of their educational duties. This function, moreover, should be exercised by the civil authorities in the interests of procuring suitable candidates for the public offices, "when they see a lad who displays ability." Luther does not advocate universal compulsory education on the part of the State. "It is unfair," Gustav Kawerau truly says, "to represent Luther as the harbinger of universal compulsory education."⁵⁶ Neither is there any justification for the assumption that enthusiasm for the humanities and the advance of science and education in themselves constituted the starting-point of this treatise. "The religious viewpoints alone are the decisive ones," remarks Julius Böhmer, a Protestant author. Another Protestant, F. M. Schiele, says Luther was concerned with devising a remedy for the "collapse of an educational system which had flourished throughout Germany"—a collapse "brought about by the preaching of Wittenberg." The damage could be remedied only with great difficulty and very slowly in the course of subsequent years.

Schiele holds that the statement that "Luther's reformation gave a general stimulus to the schools and to education generally," must "melt away into nothing."⁵⁷

Whilst various other writings of Luther may be passed over, there is one more work of his which is deserving of mention, as it reveals a more pleasing aspect of the man. It is his German edition of the fables of *Aesop*, intended for the use of school children. This work was intended, on the one hand, to furnish a diversion from serious thoughts; on the other, Luther sincerely desired by his edition of *Aesop* to provide the young with "the finest possible precept, admonition, and instruction" adapted to their "external life in the world." The adaptation was couched in classical language and the indecent

⁵⁵ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. VI, p. 21.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 26 sq.

admixtures of former editions were omitted. Luther intended to make it a "jovial and lovable, and withal a respectable and decent *Æsop*." The projected edition was never completed. Only parts of it are available.⁵⁸ They are valuable on account of the suitable German proverbs which the editor has inserted. In general, his works abound in proverbs, of which he made a collection in 1535 or 1536.⁵⁹

Two controversial works of Luther remain to be mentioned as belonging in a certain sense to his Coburg productions. Both were directed against the diet of Augsburg and were issued soon after Luther's return to Wittenberg, whilst he was still in an agitated frame of mind and filled with the thoughts of his sojourn at the castle of Coburg. They are entitled: "Warning of Doctor Martin Luther to his Dear Germans," and "Gloss on the Pretended Imperial Edict."

The "Warning"⁶⁰ is directed above all else against the use of force on the part of the Empire and the Emperor, which he believed to be impending. Casting the most vulgar and insulting aspersions upon the Catholic members of the diet, he advises his "dear Germans" not to come to the aid of the papists in the event of war or insurrection. Necessity demands, he says, that resistance be offered to every violent attack.⁶¹ The suggestive force of this impassioned work was calculated to inflame the minds of the masses, who had embraced the new theology, with a determination to offer stern resistance. This book was read aloud to the mob in public squares and markets and from it the people learned that if Dr. Martin Luther would be executed, a large number of bishops, priests, and monks would go with him. Luther here spoke to the masses as "the Prophet of the Germans," claiming that it was necessary for him to adopt this title against the papists and asses.

In the "Gloss"⁶² he proclaims with the Psalmist (XC, 13): "In the name and calling of God I shall walk upon the lion and the asp and trample under foot the young lion and dragon, and this shall be commenced during my life and accomplished after my death." His

⁵⁸ *Werke*, Weimar ed., Vol. L, pp. 440 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. LXIV, pp. 349 sqq.

⁵⁹ Weimar ed., Vol. LI, pp. 645 sqq.

⁶⁰ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, iii, pp. 276 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XXV, 2 ed., pp. 1 sqq.

⁶¹ On the "Warning" cf. Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, pp. 388 sq., 391 sq.; Vol. III, pp. sq., 442 sq.; Vol. IV, p. 316.

⁶² Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, iii, pp. 331 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XXV, 2nd ed., pp. 49 sqq.

self-consciousness rises to a dizzy height against the "insipid cattle and filthy swine" who would conceal the pretended imperial edict, which is denounced as an invalid, unjust, and surreptitious decree. All were warned to leave untouched his principal dogma of justification by faith alone. "Thus I, Doctor Martin Luther, most unworthy evangelist of our Lord Jesus Christ, declare that the Roman emperor, the Turkish emperor, the Tartar emperor, the pope, all cardinals, bishops, priests, princes, lords, the whole world and all the devils shall leave this article stand; and in addition, they shall have the flames of hell about their heads and no reward. This be my, Dr. Luther's, inspiration from the Holy Ghost." The Catholic leaders saw in this declaration an inspiration from an entirely different source. The quixotic exclamations in which Luther indulged at that time almost approach the border-line of insanity. It is less difficult to understand why Luther should invoke the nationalistic sentiments of his "dear Germans," for he wished to incite them against their alien oppressors, especially against "the principal rogue, Pope Clement, and his servant, the legate Campegius." In both of the works here under consideration he repeats the most revolting lies about the Augsburg diet; as, for instance, when he asserts that it was evident at Augsburg, and many admitted it, that he was in the right and that the Catholic Church was steeped in errors, but tyrannical obstinacy had triumphed.

Luther was most furious against Duke George of Saxony, the protagonist of the Catholic cause, in the months following the diet. On Easter, 1531, appeared his diatribe "Against the Assassin of Dresden," which is a monument of hatred against a noble prince who remained loyal to the Emperor.⁶³ In his published reply to Luther's "Warning to his Dear Germans," George had defended the diet, the empire, and Catholicism, and represented Luther as a rebel. This forceful reply was published anonymously and is lost, except for a few lines which have been preserved by Cochlaeus. Another reply directed against Luther's "Gloss" was published by Francis Arnoldi under the title: "Reply to the Booklet Launched by Martin Luther against the Imperial Recess."⁶⁴ Its author was a pastor in Cöllen near Meissen, who was well acquainted with Duke George. Arnoldi's

⁶³ Weimar ed., Vol. XXX, iii, pp. 446 sqq.; Erl. ed., Vol. XXV, 2 ed., pp. 108 sqq.

⁶⁴ Erl. ed., Vol. XXV, 2 ed., pp. 111 sqq.

"Reply" most probably embodied some ideas suggested by the Duke.

Luther, in his libel "Against the Assassin of Dresden," endeavored to defend himself particularly against the charge of sedition, which Duke George and others made against him. The word "assassin" in the title signifies "calumniator." But Luther is not satisfied with defending himself; he once more attacks the "blood-hounds" of the opposition and announces that he will continue his attacks in perpetuity. He says he had humiliated himself sufficiently, nay, too often, and it would now be his boast that he would bubble over with invectives and imprecations against the papists. At the close he admits that he is unable to pray without cursing. He could not utter the petition: "Hallowed be Thy Name," without adding the words: "Accursed, damned, disgraced shall be the name of the papists and of all who blaspheme Thy Name." "Verily," he says, "I pray thus every day." And he believes that God hears his prayers; for even now He has miraculously caused "this terrible diet to come to naught." "In spite of all, however, I maintain a kindly, friendly, peaceable, and Christian heart towards everybody; even my greatest enemies know this."

In reply Arnoldi published an answer "To the Libel," etc., which was again inspired by Duke George, who had been so grievously insulted by Luther.⁶⁵ Like the first work which bore Arnoldi's name, this one, too, is composed in a very blunt style. It was the Duke's desire that free vent be given to his sentiments of indignation and that satisfaction be rendered to the maltreated Catholics by way of a severe attack upon their opponent. On account of the religious revolt, the Duke had suffered much in his duchy, despite sincere efforts to abolish the prevailing abuses. The monasteries and the clergy were profoundly shaken by the religious revolt, and his people were being corrupted. Luther had only himself to blame if the Duke and Arnoldi, animated by love of the Church, the Emperor and the Empire, and convinced that they were standing before an abyss, to a certain extent imitated his offensive language by using such epithets as blood-hounds, whoremongers, etc. The historian cannot shirk the unpleasant duty of quoting some passages from these violent replies. There is first of all the quotation which Cochlæus has preserved from the pamphlet entirely composed by Duke George.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 129 sqq.

⁶⁶ Cochlæus, *De actis, etc.* (1565), folio 211b; Erl. ed., Vol. XXV, 2 ed., p. 89.

5. A STRONG SAXON PHILIPPIC AGAINST LUTHER

"You have entitled your work against the diet, 'Warning to my dear Germans.' It would have been more correct if you had entitled it, Seduction and Incitement to Rebellion and Insurrection. For you are plainly bent upon inciting the people to revolt against the Emperor and all in authority. You proceed with artful snares, with lies and outcries, with a veritable specter of assertions. The devil is called upon to assist you on every page. May those pass judgment on this pamphlet who call you a living saint and say you are possessed of the spirit of God." Thus far Cochlaeus' quotation from Duke George.

The following quotations are excerpted from the other works mentioned above:

Your "Glosses" contain as many lies as words. You are an infamous apostate and pervert the truth when you say that the married state is prohibited in the Catholic Church. You lie when you maintain that capital punishment is contemplated for those who do not use consecrated salt. You lie when you assert that Duke George of Saxony and the Elector of Brandenburg promised to supply the Emperor with 5000 horses against the Lutherans. You lie when you aver that the Emperor is resolved to make war upon you Lutherans for the purpose of suppressing the gospel. You lie like a conscious, faithless, and perfused scoundrel, when you state that the Catholic princes have formed a league at Dessau for the purpose of attacking you. Thus you heap lie upon lie. Our princes formed a league for the sake of preserving the peace, only to further the welfare of their people, and to the disadvantage of nobody, as events have shown. You inveigh against all papists, including the Emperor, traducing them as traitors, miscreants, sacrilegious blood-hounds. At the same time you falsely pretend not to have spoken against the Emperor or any other ruler; it is as if one said that he intended to produce white, but in reality produced black.

The noble-minded Emperor's sole intention, formed after due deliberation, is to make order prevail in the Church. He will not allow priests to consort with dissolute women. You, evil-minded apostate, interpret this intention in a way which the devil in hell could not surpass in malice.

Everyone knows that your proper sphere is vituperation. Your scolding against me I regard as the vaporings of an old shrew. Your thunderous blows do not intimidate me, but I dare tell you the truth. If you bark at me, I will make you spit fire like a hell-hound. A perfused renegade ought to be answered so that the whole world may know his name. For it is an old saying that a wolf-roast demands canine sauces.

Hear me, Doctor Luther. I wish to propose for your consideration two words which you apply to the princes who are opposed to you, namely, *sacrileger* and *fool*. You, dishonorable and carnal wretch, fly at your opponents as if they were sacrilegious despoilers of churches. But who was it that sacrilegiously robbed the property of Christ, which emperors, kings, princes, noblemen, citizens, and peasants, inspired by ardent Christian charity and cherishing His sacred Passion, donated of old to the monasteries, parish-churches, and altars? Verily, tell me truly, Squire Martin, Doctor Luther, who despoiled the poor village parsons of their wretched income? Tell me, Doctor Swinetrough (*Säutrog*) Luther, who despoiled God of so many thousands of souls during the last twelve years and sent them to Lucifer in hell? Alas, that arch-murderer of souls, Luther! Who robbed Christ of His spouses, the consecrated virgins, many of whom had served God for years in the religious life, and forced them into a miserable, wretched, and erroneous life, so that they now run about in great want and in disgrace? Fie on you, Martin Luther, you perjured, sacrilegious whore-master of runaway monks and nuns, apostate priests and all apostates! Who robbed and despoiled the Roman Emperor, that beloved, innocent flower of Christianity, Charles V, and the kings, princes, and lords, of honor and obedience on the part of their subjects, by spreading false, seditious, and damnable writings and doctrines? It was you, you execrable wretch! Who is responsible for the many thieves and rogues that now infest almost every nook and corner of the land? It is you, Doctor Luther!

Do you not know from Holy Writ what reward is in store for robbers? Luther, your end and reward are known only to God.

The fruits and splendors of the new gospel are to be measured by other standards. Who among you is able to check the growing drunkenness and marital infidelity, the insubordination towards parents and masters? How many violations of property, what crimes of highwaymen and prowling thieves! This is the liberty which you have given to them: these are the noble fruits of your teaching! You owe your success to the false liberty which you have proclaimed.

You can well afford to preach as you do, for you enjoy the support of your government. If you had not been favored by the Elector, much bloodshed, revolt, and dissension, and the resurgence of all the old-time heresies would have been avoided. Your place is the expected church council. There you would meet men who are competent to dispute with you. But you prefer to hurl your invectives from a safe place.

You say you are obliged to speak out because you are a doctor. Now, I well know the oath which the doctors of Sacred Scripture are obliged to take. It binds them to teach in conformity with the Church. You have violated this oath. I fear you will be promoted in a school of which the devil is rector; for, like you, he is all bluster and tumult.

You boast of your proficiency in German. If the German style of your speeches is so subtle, then I know doctors in the country who are quite superior to you in the vehemence of their German rhetoric, especially when they are under the influence of strong drink. Ofttimes they beat with their fists. If you were among them, you would not be taken for a doctor, but for a swine-herd. You try by the raving fire of your words to start a conflagration; but when the fire meets a solid rock, it merely covers it with black soot, but cannot damage it.

You boast in your addresses that St. John Hus predicted your coming. Hus is holy in the same manner in which he is holy who calls him a saint or canonizes him, or has him prophesy about himself. Both he and you are archheretics. It would have been better had you disputed with the learned Master Erasmus of Rotterdam after he told you the truth in his "Hypaspistes." He has so attuned his chords that you could not reply. When you cease barking, you become silent, but you keep on sneaking about treacherously like a mad dog.

Whilst the Peasants' War was on, you delivered powerful speeches. How many have lost their property and their lives, their bodies and their souls, as a result of your false, seductive writings and your Satanic doctrines and sermons! All the rebellious peasants who have been slain in that war will rise up against you on Judgment Day and exclaim: "Woe to you!" You are an arch-assassin of souls and bodies. You are guilty of their death, even as Pilate is guilty of Christ's. It is you who are a desperate, perjured blood-hound, not they whom you call by this name to-day.

The whole world knows that your conscience upbraids you day and night, and that you can nevermore be glad and enjoy peace of mind, even though exteriorly you display a joyful disposition towards your Catherine von Bora.

In ten years you have been unable to settle in your own mind what you will or ought to believe. You do not know to-day what you will believe a year from now—your own writings prove it. You cannot come to an agreement even with your own followers as to whether you intend to abide by your present doctrines or invent others. As a consequence, the poor have become to obfuscated that they scarcely know what to believe, and almost every village has seen the rise of a new and distinct sect. What prudent man, therefore, would adhere to you and desert the Catholic Church to join your ranks? You have written that everybody ought to preach the Gospel as he understands it. Now Karlstadt, Zwingli, Bucer, Capito, Oecolampadius, the Anabaptists, Hubmaier, Hut, Müntzer, and many others have followed your advice and preached according to their own judgment, thus extending the misery which you have set afoot. You ought to restore order instead of continuously heaping maledictions upon the papists.

Hear me, you arch blasphemers; you admit before all the world that, when in your daily prayer you say: "Hallowed be Thy Name!" you are perforce

compelled to exclaim: "Accursed, damned, reviled be the name of the papists and all blasphemers." Who blasphemes more outrageously than you? You boast that you are a Christian doctor and preacher. Do you not know that Holy Scripture teaches you not to curse your enemies, but to love them for God's sake? You should pray for them, as Christ did when He hung upon the cross. You curse the papacy when you utter the words: "Thy kingdom come!", but do not forget that no one on earth is so much opposed to the kingdom of Christ as you are. You would dethrone Him if it were possible. Your followers have already cast His images out of the churches and demolished them.

Your writings display the temerity and folly of a poor apostate who has gone astray. If you want to see an arrogant fellow, behold, here is the most arrogant of all. If you wish to see a destroyer of other people's property, behold, here is one from whom even the property of beggars is not safe. If you want to see an unchaste man, behold, here is one who violates the chastity of a nun. If you want to see an agitator and a rebel, behold, here is one guilty of a hundred thousand murders and homicides, one who despises all spiritual and secular authority and stands convicted as a falsifier of Holy Writ.

In you we find the source of every malice, evil, sin, and infamy; an unadulterated rogue.

Had not St. Paul written of Antichrist as he did, I should believe that you were he; but undoubtedly you are his precursor. They are right who maintain that Luther is certainly possessed by the devil. I believe that the whole legion of devils which Christ drove out of the possessed and permitted to enter into a herd of swine, is in you. As the devils made the swine so mad that they drowned themselves in the sea: so the legion of devils has made your monkish cranium so mad and giddy that you are unable to enjoy any peace by day or night, until the Christians of all parties and places are become confused and perplexed and finally plunged into the abyss of hell.

May you and your erring followers by the grace of God be brought back to the way of truth! Would that you had a sincere desire to return! May God grant you repentance for your sins here below, and eternal happiness to us all!

These are freely rendered extracts from the terrible excoriation delivered against Luther from Dresden, especially by the sturdy pastor, Arnoldi, in the course of the recriminations that followed the diet of Augsburg. The language exceeds the bounds of propriety—which is pardonable because of the heat of controversy—and illustrates the fact that those who had become indignant at Luther freely imitated the rhetorical tricks of their antagonist. At all events this denunciation is a historical monument of an age when fierce con-

trasts reached their climax. Although not by any means exempt from passion, it reveals, by its very ardor, as no description could, the abhorrence with which Catholic spokesmen viewed Luther, as he appeared to them in his actions and writings, and the schism produced by him in peaceful Germany.

CHAPTER XIV

LUTHER ON THE SIDE OF THE SCHMALKALDIC LEAGUE —HIS TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

I. LUTHER'S CHANGE OF OPINION RELATIVE TO ARMED RESISTANCE

After the diet of Augsburg, a striking change took place in Luther's attitude toward the question of armed resistance to the Emperor. The stringent measures of the "Reichskammergericht" announced in the "Abschied" of the diet against the secularization of Catholic church property and the rigorous steps which were generally adopted against the new religion, produced a definite attitude on the part of Protestants. The jurists of Electoral Saxony expressed themselves to Chancellor Brück increasingly in favor of preparedness and forceful resistance to the imperial mandates. Philip of Hesse, who had formed ambitious projects against the Emperor, was prepared to open hostilities at the first favorable opportunity and counted on the support of all those who shared his ideas.

Luther personally would have preferred a policy of watchful waiting without the use of violence. He held that the execution of the resolutions adopted at Augsburg should be demonstrated as impossible by permitting the innovations to progress in a peaceful way. He would have been pleased if things had been left as they were and time thus gained for the further propagation of the new gospel. However, circumstances forced him to change his attitude—a change which led to self-contradiction and open sanction of that armed resistance which he had previously condemned.

His former teaching had been that it was not permissible to meet violence with violence, especially against the Emperor; that, according to the gospel, unjust persecution was to be suffered with Christian resignation and in the expectation of final assistance from above. Despite his blustering, various reasons determined him to issue such declarations repeatedly. In the first place, he was influenced by the after-effects of the mystical idealism which he had developed in the monastery, and according to which the kingdom of God knew only a yielding disposition, humility, and submission; every true Christian must allow himself to be "oppressed and disgraced," but the de-