
A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE IV.

LIFE OF PHILIP MELANCHTHON.

By E. E. Edwards, Professor at Andover.

Introductory Observations.

It was the remark of a zealous adherent of Luther, Professor Mayer of Greifswalde, that for the Reformation of the Church, three Luthers would be worth more than three hundred Melanchthons. This observation of the eager partizan contains some truth and some error. That Luther merits the first place as a reformer, there can be no doubt. That he could perform the work assigned him far better without Melanchthon, than Melanchthon could undertake it without Luther, is alike unquestionable. To expect to demolish the errors and abuses of the Romish hierarchy with a cautious and lenient hand, would be a mere delusion. An earlier period had shown, that even men of an intrepid character, with their writings filled with admonitory voices, could pass by and leave few traces behind. A man of dauntless courage, who could wield the club of Hercules, was needed,—one who would stand firmer and more erect, in proportion to the number and fierceness of the assaults which should be made upon him. Such an heroic spirit was Luther, and distant ages will not forget that it was he who broke the fetters of superstition, and led Christendom once more into the light of civil and religious freedom.

But it must not be forgotten, that Luther was one of those excitable spirits, who are inclined, in the violence of passion, to break over all restraint. It was a wise arrangement of Divine Providence that Melanchthon should appear, a spirit of gentler mould, who could, with a wise hand and at the right moment, calm and direct the vehement feelings of his great leader. Luther's excessive zeal was tempered by Melanchthon's mildness, while Melanchthon's yielding nature was quickened and invigorated by the courageous bearing of his friend. Luther alone, or two leaders like Luther, might have rushed into perilous extremes, and occasioned the ruin of the edifice which they were at so much pains to erect. A striking example of Melanchthon's

happy influence over Luther is mentioned by the former. "Luther, on one occasion, seemed to be angry beyond measure. A deep silence reigned around among all. At length I addressed him with the line,

'Vince animos iramque tuam, qui cætera vincis.'

Luther, laughing, replied: 'We will dispute no further about it.'"

Another ground of the necessity of Melanchthon's influence in the Reformation, consists in his extraordinary ability to present related truths in their due order and logical method. Luther, in his unceasing contests, had little leisure to investigate fundamentally and develop fully the truths which he announced in his writings; or had opportunity been allowed him for this purpose, his soul was too impetuous to permit him to construct a coherent doctrinal system. He gives a correct view of the case in the following remarkable words: "I am born to be forever fighting with opponents and with the devil himself, which gives a controversial and warlike cast to all my works. I clear the ground of stumps and trees, root up thorns and briars, fill up ditches, raise causeways and smooth the roads through the woods; but to Philip Melanchthon it belongs, by the grace of God, to perform a milder and more grateful labor, to build, to plant, to sow, to water, to please by elegance and taste." Though the destruction of enormous abuses and errors was indispensably necessary, and though Luther was remarkably fitted for this work, yet it was not less important, that, in the bosom of the new community, a man should arise, who could arrange the detached parts of the teachings of the gospel into one whole, and by the symmetry and beauty of the edifice, win those minds to the truth that clearly saw the pernicious nature of error, or who still doubted whether in the midst of so many disjointed fragments, a new and well-arranged system could be formed. Hence Melanchthon made it a principal business of his life, to unfold divine truth methodically, so that every one might be convinced, after a calm examination, of the truth of God's word. In a visitation of the churches, in 1527, he first learned the pressing necessities of the people in respect to religious doctrine. Thenceforward, he zealously labored to set forth divine truth with greater precision and simplicity, so as to prevent the bad effects which might flow from very common misapprehensions of the doctrines of Luther.

Again, Melanchthon's labors and influence were of inestimable service to the Reformation, in consequence of his intellectual gifts

and accomplished education. With the exception of Erasmus, he was the best Greek scholar of the age. As a teacher, he was quiet and perfectly unassuming in manner; but possessed of that contagious enthusiasm, which gave him, through the thousands of young men who thronged his lectures from every part of Europe, a position of the most commanding power and influence. The Protestant doctrines were thus associated with the revival of literature. Luther was, by no means, unskilled in the treasures of ancient learning. A high position for that period would be assigned him by all unprejudiced judges, yet Melanchthon was in this respect decidedly his superior, his advice in difficult cases being eagerly sought and highly valued. Luther's translation of the Bible into German, the great work of the Reformation, was largely indebted to Melanchthon's exact philological knowledge. He revised and amended every part of it, besides translating the three books of Maccabees in a diction remarkable for its simplicity and purity. In the later editions of this Bible, his careful hand is everywhere manifest. In 1540, Luther wrote to him from Worms, "that we have *ventured* to put to press without your aid, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticles, Isaiah and Jeremiah." Melanchthon's knowledge of ancient philosophy was of no little use in the controversies of the Reformation. By this knowledge, he had an adroitness and tact in discussion which very few could equal. He was thus, on several occasions, enabled to unravel the most intricate sophistries of the Romish dialectics. We may refer to the discussions at Augsburg in 1530, at Worms in 1540 and 1557, and at Regensburg in 1541. To this ability in Melanchthon, no one was more ready to give decided testimony than Luther.

We may add that the exalted piety of Melanchthon, accompanied with all the gentler graces of humanity, was of incalculable value to the Reformation. If the boldness and unquenchable zeal of Paul reäppeared in Luther, the attractive piety and loving spirit of John were no less apparent in Melanchthon. He was the beloved disciple that would have been invited to lean on the Saviour's breast. Amid the fierce strifes of the sixteenth century, how refreshing it is to find one who tried to copy the peaceful and forgiving temper of his Master, and who breathed on earth the spirit of Heaven. The individual, whom the universities were most anxious to secure, whom Reuchlin and Erasmus loved and honored, whose choicest earthly treasures were the old poets and orators, was most remarkable for his unaffected

humility and fraternal love. The enemies of the Reformation could not but feel the power of his example, nor cease to regret that his talents and character did not continue to support the declining hierarchy.

In the following pages, we propose to detail, at some length, the principal events in the life of Melanchthon, especially those which relate to his domestic and social character. These have been, for the most part, passed by in the histories of the Reformation, and many of them in the Lives of Melanchthon. The doctrines of the Reformers are so well known, as well as the general history of the period, that it will be unnecessary to dwell upon them at any length. The main source from which we have drawn our materials, is the work of Frederic Galle, published at Halle, in 1840, in 475 pp. 8vo., under the title, "Versuch einer Characteristik Melanchthons als Theologen und einer Entwickelung seines Lehrbegriffs." It was first composed in the form of an essay, to which the Theological Faculty of the University of Halle awarded a prize in 1837. The subject was afterwards thoroughly reïnvestigated, and the treatise greatly enlarged. The production bears every mark of having come from an able and candid writer. Its special value, above all the preceding Memoirs of the Reformer, consists in the ample use which the author makes of the Correspondence of Melanchthon, collected and published by Dr. Bretschneider, in six vols. quarto, under the general title of Corpus Reformatorum. Much of this correspondence existed before only in manuscript.

Melanchthon's Birth and Parentage.

Philip Melanchthon was born Feb. 16, 1497. His father, George Schwarzerd, was a native of Heidelberg. He was a skilful manufacturer of various kinds of armor, and as such was held, in that turbulent age, in high estimation. He often visited the courts of the princes, and enjoyed the special favor of the emperor Maximilian. As early as 1496, he had taken up his abode in Bretten, a small town in Baden, near Carlsruhe, then in the Palatinate of the Rhine. Here he became connected in marriage with Barbara Reuter, daughter of the burgomaster of the place. He is represented as a man of decided piety and uncommonly exact and fervent in his devotions, notwithstanding that the business in which he was engaged would not seem to be

favorable to the cultivation of personal religion. It is mentioned, as a characteristic fact, that he was in the habit of rising from his bed at midnight, in order to repeat his customary prayer. Hence the Christian education of his family was an object of paramount importance. In this duty he found an efficient co-laborer in his wife, who is described as a discreet and pious woman,[1] who looked well to the ways of her household, and who sought, in the frequent absences of her husband, to impress on the minds of her children, five in number, the lessons of virtue and piety which they had received from their father, and to keep them as far as possible from the contaminations of vice. Her father, in the days of his old age, found no greater delight than in amusing and instructing his grandchildren. Philip especially attracted his attention, as a boy of extraordinary intellectual promise.

The father of Melanchthon died in 1507, after lingering several years under a disease, caused, as it was supposed, by his drinking water from a poisoned well. Three days before his death, he said to his sons: "Since I must now die, I desire that my children may be members of the church, that they may live in communion with it, may have the knowledge of God and finally be happy in eternal glory." Melanchthon mentions this in the Postils and subjoins: "I recollect my father said these things when he blessed me before his death." Nine days before his own decease, he repeated the same words to his children.

Early Education of Melanchthon.

Melanchthon appears to have enjoyed all the advantages for education which were then accessible. After spending a short time in the elementary school at Bretten, he was placed under the care of John Hungarus, a domestic tutor, whose instructions

[1] Winsheim says, "mater Barbara matrona fuit honestissima, singulari sapientia et morum gravitate praedita." A stanza which was frequently on her lips was this:

> "He who is a free spender
> Then his plough or toil can render,
> Sure of ruin slow or fast,
> May perhaps be hanged at last."

Melanchthon sometimes said to his pupils: "Didici hoc a mea matre, vos etiam observate." She remained twelve years a widow after the death of her first husband. She was subsequently twice married, first to Christopher Kolbe, a citizen of Bretten, and after his death to Melchior Hechel. Melanchthon had six brothers and sisters in-law.

he was accustomed, in later life, strongly to commend. "I had a teacher," he wrote, "who was an excellent grammarian and who passed an honorable old age in preaching the gospel at Pforzheim. He compelled me, in studying grammar, to go through with the constructions, and also to give the rules for twenty or thirty lines of Virgil. He allowed me to omit nothing. Whenever I fell into error, he corrected me, yet with fitting moderation. In this manner he made me a grammarian. He was an excellent man; he loved me as a son, and I him as a father, and I hope we shall shortly meet in everlasting glory. I loved him, though his discipline was severe; yet it was not severity, but a paternal chastisement, exciting me to diligence. He compelled me to look out the rules in the evening so that I could recite them."

During two years Melanchthon attended the public school at Pforzheim, a town a few miles south of Bretten, in Baden. The school, then under the charge of George Simler, had attained a high rank throughout Germany. Here Melanchthon made such rapid progress that soon after he had completed his twelfth year, he was prepared to enter the University of Heidelberg. At this celebrated institution he remained three years, and devoted himself particularly to the study of the classics.[1] He lived in the house of Doctor Pallas, and taught the sons of the count of Löwenstein. He was distinguished above all his youthful companions, by his acquaintance with the Greek language. "Where shall I find a Grecian?" once exclaimed a teacher, as he propounded a difficult question. With one voice, all the scholars cried out: "Melanchthon! Melanchthon!" He was admitted to the degree of bachelor of arts, June 10, 1511. In 1512 he repaired to Tübingen, where he soon received a master's degree, and where he confirmed his reputation, partly by his lectures on the ancient classics and partly by the books which he published, especially his Greek Grammar. He was now ranked among the ablest philologists of his age. In 1516, Erasmus wrote: "What promise does not that youth, or boy, as we might almost term him, Philip Melanchthon, hold out? He is about equally eminent in his knowledge of Latin and Greek. What acuteness in argu-

[1] About this time, he changed his name, at the suggestion of Reuchlin, from Schwarzerd to the more euphonic one of Melanchthon, both words signifying in their respective languages, *black earth*. This change of names was then not uncommon, e. g. Reuchlin, originally Reuch, as in Latin, *fumus*, *fumulus*; Erasmus's name in Dutch was *Gerhard*, in Latin, *Desiderius*.

ment! What purity and elegance of diction! What manifold knowledge! What delicacy and extraordinary tenderness of feeling!"

Melanchthon did not, however, confine his attention to classical literature. In other branches of knowledge he felt a deep interest. While at Heidelberg, he pursued with much zeal the study of mathematics and astronomy, under the direction of Conrad Helvetius, and at Tübingen he attended the lectures of Stöffler, who was still more distinguished. "I remember," he writes, "that when I and Oecolampadius were reading Hesiod together, and a certain strange desire seized me, though I was then a mere youth, of comprehending, among other things relating to the rising and setting of the stars, these words, "quadragiata dies latere Pleiades," no one of the multitude at Tübingen, could aid us, except Stöffler." While here Melanchthon also studied the principles of law and medicine. Still, he attended with special zeal to pursuits of a philosophical nature. The works of Aristotle, which he had long before cursorily perused in defective translations, he now studied in the original, preparing himself to edit an edition of some of them. Subsequently these works engrossed much of his attention. The thoroughness of his philosophical training may be inferred from the fact, that the controversy between the Nominalists and Realists, which was then raging at Tübingen, was by his exertions set at rest; the young disputant contending on the side of the Nominalists, that universal ideas have no reality in truth, but are mere names or mental abstractions.

Though Melanchthon's religious education, while he was under the parental roof, had been conducted in some respects on false principles, yet it had served to implant within him a fresh and vigorous faith. While a boy he had the greatest delight in public worship, and was particularly attached to the lives of the saints. "I recollect," he says in after life, "what joy it gave us when we were lads, to read the verses which are found in the legends of the saints. Similar lines were recited by the preachers in the church, and when we imitated the sermons at home, we repeated those verses. Subsequently, women and girls brought something to our altar, as was customary in the church. If we had had better instructors at that time, it would have been more useful to us. Still, it was a part of domestic education to

[1] Comm. in Ep. ad Thess.

employ children with such things, rather than to allow them to roam about in the streets with their boisterous noises."

With these early tendencies to piety, it is not strange that Melanchthon, after extensive excursions into various fields of knowledge, should turn with earnest love to the study of theology. At that time, however, there was little in this department of science as studied in the universities, which could satisfy the mind. With an almost total neglect of practical theology, a system made up of abstruse and hair-splitting propositions, was the great object of pursuit, which, though useful in sharpening the intellect and worthy of admiration as a monument of human ingenuity, could never satisfy, for any length of time, truly religious feelings. Melanchthon's youthful enthusiasm was excited and absorbed by this ingenious superstructure. He sat attentively at the feet of Lempus, the theological master at Tübingen, and the most celebrated teacher in that department, and saw spread out on a black tablet, figures in chalk, designed to aid where verbal demonstrations were not sufficient. Thus for example, the doctrine of transubstantiation was depicted. Still, Melanchthon sought for instruction, not merely in the lecture-room and in the volumes of the earlier Scholastics, but with his predilections for Nominalism, he enjoyed, for some time, great satisfaction in the writings of William Occam, the restorer of this theory.[1] But this could last only for a time. Melanchthon had now found another and purer source of religious knowledge; he had obtained from Reuchlin a copy of the Bible. Previously his great relative[2] had given him a number of valuable books, while he lived at Pforzheim with Reuchlin's brother George. But the Scriptures were the most precious treasure. With what love and de-

[1] Thus in 1521 he wrote: "Tu vero, Occhame, deliciae quondam meae." Yet in 1529, he says to Camerarius: "I thank you for the Dialogues of Occam, yet they are more frigid than I had supposed. In the whole system there is plainly no solid instruction." Luther, it is well known, had originally great reverence for the "Singular Doctor."

[2] He was related to Melanchthon on the mother's side. Melanchthon, in his Postils mentions the following incident: "I heard Reuchlin telling that he had heard the lectures of Argyropylus in Italy on Thucydides. When he entered the lecture-room, he stated in reply to the inquiry of the teacher, that he had come to listen to something on the Greek language. Being then asked; Do you understand Greek at all, he answered, I do. Read, says Argyropylus. Reuchlin thereupon read a passage. Do you understand it, asked the lecturer? Somewhat, was the reply. What is the sense? The young German gave it as well as he could. O, said the lecturer, Greece, in our exile, has come over the Alps."

light did the young Reformer expatiate over the fields of divine truth, plucking and gathering the wholesome fruits which divine wisdom has here caused to grow. "In reading this book," he says, "he was so constant that nobody would believe that the volume which he always carried in his bosom, was a sacred one, but rather that he was enamored with some profane author." Through this steady application to the sacred writings, his eyes were opened to perceive into what a barren desert Christianity had been borne by her bishops and clergy. For example, a friar read from the pulpit a proposition of Aristotle; another preached that the wooden shoe of the Franciscans was made of the tree of knowledge in Paradise. While such puerilities were proclaimed in the house of God, Melanchthon often read the Bible in silence, during the time of public worship, though sometimes thereby subjecting himself to malevolent remark. His love for the truth and for free inquiry, was much heightened by the result of the controversy which the Cologne theologians had waged with Reuchlin.[1] This eminent scholar had been compelled for his own justification, to prepare some papers to be sent partly to the Papal court and partly to that of the emperor. An elegant transcript of these, Melanchthon made with his own hands, for the use of the author. This friendly service greatly contributed to enlighten his own judgment in respect to the state of the church and the demands of the age. Still more useful was the frequent personal intercourse which he now enjoyed with Reuchlin, who then lived at Stuttgard and often rode to Tübingen to spend several days with his young friend. Their love was like that of a father and his child. The enlightened and unprejudiced mind of the elder necessarily exerted a great influence on the susceptible heart of the younger.

In the Providence of God, Reuchlin became the means by which Melanchthon was directed to a wider and important field of labor. Frederic the Wise, Elector of Saxony, was now in search of a competent teacher of the Greek language for his newly founded university at Wittenberg. Reuchlin being consulted,

[1] Reuchlin was accustomed to read the Bible very diligently, and to carry the New Testament with him on his travels. When at Innspruck, as ambassador to Maximilian, he took a Greek New Testament, written in golden letters which Erasmus used in his edition of that volume. Two Venetian ambassadors were then at the court, one of them said to his companion, "Lo! those who know this language are applauded in Germany, but are despised among us in Italy."

could recommend no one for the post with greater confidence than Melanchthon. "He will promote," writes Reuchlin, "the honor, reputation and usefulness of the university. For I know no one among the Germans who surpasses him, except Erasmus of Rotterdam, who is a Hollander. Melanchthon also goes beyond us all in Latin." To Melanchthon he wrote July 24, 1518; "Lo! a letter has arrived from our gracious prince, under his own signature, in which he promises you pay and favor. So I will not now address you in the words of the poet, but of the promise of God which was vouchsafed to believing Abraham, 'Get thee out from thy native land and from thy kindred and from thy father's house to the land which I shall show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great and thou shalt be blessed.' Such is the presentiment of my mind. So I hope of thee, my Philip, my care, my consolation. Go then, with joy and good courage."

Melanchthon as Professor of Greek.

Melanchthon travelled on horseback from Tübingen to Wittenberg. At an age so young and with a heart so susceptible, he must have been the subject of various and conflicting emotions. He was quitting a university where he had labored indefatigably to sow the seeds of true learning. But instead of generous support, he had been met, for the most part with the envy and malice of the defendants of the old philosophy; his motives had been traduced, and his doctrines, as they could not be refuted by argument, were made the butt of poor attempts at wit. With the exception of Simler, professor of law, he seems to have had little sympathy among the leading men in that ancient and bigoted institution. On the other hand, he was now leaving the exciting scenes of Southern Germany, the places of his birth, and education. He had bid farewell to not a few young men whom he had charmed by his enthusiasm and made his firm friends by his gentleness and love. And above all, he was leaving the honored Reuchlin, who had been to him more than a father. Besides, he was now entering upon a new and untried sphere. To an adult, experienced in the various fortunes of life, the future would have occasioned some solicitude. How much more must a heart like that of the sensitive and youthful Reformer have been affected? The thought of meeting Luther whose fame was now extending over Christendom, must have been alternately elevat-

ing and depressing. He had never seen the son of the miner, whose spiritual hammer was ringing on the old fortresses of papacy. The ruddy and bashful stripling might seem small in the eyes of the champion of Protestantism, who was not always very considerate towards his weaker brethren. But he went on, trusting in his Almighty Guardian, who was opening before him "a wide field of labor," not free indeed from sharp thorns, but at first full of flowers. At Nüremberg, he formed an intimate acquaintance with the celebrated Pirckheimer. At Leipsic, he was treated with marked hospitality, especially by George Mosellanus, professor of Greek. A splendid entertainment was provided in honor of the youthful guest. On the 25th of August, 1518, he reached Wittenberg and first introduced himself to Luther. His reception was not very exhilarating to his spirits. Luther had some misgivings, as he noticed the timidity and unimposing exterior of the young Grecian. On the 29th, Melanchthon delivered his first lecture in the hall of the university, on Improvements in the Education of Youth. Before him sat all the citizens who made any pretensions to learning, and the Professors of all the Faculties with their pupils. Luther listened to him with the closest attention. Three or four days afterwards, he wrote: "Philip had a crowded auditory. As long as he lives, I desire no other teacher of Greek. He has excited in all the theologians, the highest as well as the lowest, a zeal for the study of Greek." It may be readily imagined how delighted the Reformer would be with this fresh accession to the strength of a university with which, in his view, were bound up the hopes of the church as well as of true learning. A few weeks subsequently, he addressed him with the words, *Mi dulcissime Philippe!* Melanchthon, on his part, felt strongly attracted towards an individual, who, with indomitable courage, had entered the field against the foes of truth, and who was withal a man of the warmest and most generous feelings. In him the youthful Professor recognized the genuine honest German heart, true and unfeigned piety, rare acquaintance with the Scriptures, joined to an exemplary practice of their precepts and extraordinary endowments of intellect.

Melanchthon's success in teaching was such as might be anticipated. He was convinced that it was only by a fundamental philological training, that young men could be prepared for the service of the church. Beautifully he somewhere writes: "To neglect the youth in a State is like taking away the Spring from

the year. Indeed, we take it away when we let the schools run to waste, for without them religion cannot be maintained. If the study of the sciences is neglected, terrible darkness will come over the entire commonwealth." In his passion for the study of Greek literature, Melanchthon surpassed all the teachers of his age. The youth and children committed to his care, were thoroughly instructed in the grammars of the two classical languages. He delivered lectures on various Greek and Latin authors; for example, on Homer's Iliad in 1519, and on Pliny's Natural History in 1520. At that period when so many treasures of classical learning could be found only in the MSS. of libraries, the hindrances, which he had to surmount, were often incredible. "I remember," says Winsheim, "that while I was at Wittenberg—about two years—and heard our dearest teacher lecture on the Philippic orations of Demosthenes, there were only three hearers besides myself; as we were compelled, for want of copies, to transcribe for our own use from the single copy of our instructer; yet, notwithstanding all these difficulties, he labored with inconceivable patience, though suffering much from want of sleep and general ill-health." In this branch of labor, Melanchthon followed closely in the footsteps of Erasmus; while the latter advanced classical culture, more by his writings, the former aided it effectually by his oral instructions. Professor Heerbrand of Tübingen, in his funeral oration for Melanchthon, says that his hearers sometimes amounted to *two thousand*, and among these were princes, counts, barons and multitudes of the nobility. At the same time, this illustrious scholar spoke of himself with the utmost modesty. Writing to Wolfgang Fabricius, he says: "Erasmus, that glory not only of the present age, but of all ages, has cast the die for us, you, Wolfgang and Oecolampadius, must follow next. I think Martin and Carlstadt will do something. These I shall follow, *sed longo intervallo*."

Before the end of September, Melanchthon dedicated to the elector Frederic a Translation of one of Lucian's works; in October, he printed the Epistle to Titus and a small Dictionary; in November, he wrote the preface to a Hebrew Grammar. He immediately undertook a more elaborate work, on Rhetoric, which appeared in three books, in January, 1519. In February, followed another discourse; in March and April, editions of several of Plutarch's writings with a preface. In 1520 his Compend of Dialectics was published. An edition of this book and of the Rhetoric appeared afterwards with many alterations. All these

things were done during a very diversified and laborious course of teaching, for Melanchthon undertook to give instruction in Hebrew as well as Greek.

The scholars caught the enthusiasm of their teacher. "They are as industrious as ants at the university," says Luther. Reforms in the mode of instruction were proposed; with the approbation of Frederic, lectures were discontinued which had no value but for the scholastic system, and others were substituted founded on classical studies; the conditions upon which academical degrees were granted were rendered less severe; new views and ideas were introduced, all which tended to place Wittenberg in strong contrast with the other universities.

"It was an important circumstance," says Ranke,[1] "that a perfect master of Greek arose at this moment at a university, where the development of the Latin theology already led to a return to the first genuine documents of primitive Christianity. Luther now began to pursue this study with earnestness. His mind was relieved and his confidence strengthened, when the sense of a Greek phrase threw a sudden light on his theological ideas. When, for example, he learned that the idea of repentance (poenitentia), which, according to the language of the Latin church, signified expiation or satisfaction, signified in the original conception of Christ and his apostles, nothing but a change in the state of the mind, it seemed as if a mist was suddenly withdrawn from before his eyes."

Melanchthon as Theological Professor.

Melanchthon, not long after he came to Wittenberg, began to labor directly for theology. With his exact knowledge of Greek, his lectures on the New Testament could not have occasioned him much difficulty. With restless enthusiasm he sought to supply in a short time his defective knowledge of Hebrew. "Our Philip," says Luther in 1519, "is now engaged in Hebrew; so great is the fidelity and industry of the man that he scarcely grudges any pains." His zeal for theological studies was much augmented by the famous disputation at Leipsic, in the summer of 1519, when he became more deeply convinced of the contrariety of the prevailing church doctrines to divine truth. The taunting language of the pompous Eck: "Keep still, Philip,

[1] Ranke's History of the Reformation, Bk. 2. Ch. 3.

attend to your own studies and do not trouble me," impelled him now to apply himself with great earnestness to theology. On the 19th of September, of the same year, he became biblical baccalaureate, in company with John Agricola. His first theological lectures were on the Epistle to Titus in 1518. In the following year, he lectured on the Psalms, the Epistle to the Romans and on Matthew's Gospel. In reference to the latter, Luther writes: "I am sorry that I cannot send all the brethren to Philip's theological lecture on Matthew, at 6 o'clock in the morning. That little Greek goes ahead of me in theology itself." Melanchthon's theological labors were greatly increased in 1521—23, by Luther's frequent absences from Wittenberg. This was especially the case, when the Reformer was in attendance on the Diet at Worms. Still, as we shall subsequently see, his interest in these studies was somewhat vacillating.

At length, after much effort Luther prevailed on the Elector in 1526, to appoint Melanchthon in a formal manner, Professor of Theology, and to assign him a salary as such. What a blessing this arrangement became, in the good Providence of God, to Germany and Christendom, it would be difficult to describe. Students flocked to his lectures, says Heerbrand, not only from Germany, but from almost all the countries of Europe. Multitudes, attracted by the splendor of his name, resorted to Wittenberg from France, England, Hungary, Transylvania, Poland, Bohemia, even from Italy itself, yea from Greece. The mode in which Melanchthon lectured, was not such as prevails in Germany at the present time. He adopted, in a measure, the Socratic style. By questions addressed to particular individuals, he sought to enliven the monotony of an exercise and develop the talent of the pupil. In addition to his common lectures on week days, he gave on Sundays and festival-days, familiar expositions of the Gospels in Latin. This practice he continued with great conscientiousness during the eleven last years of his life. On this subject Christopher Petzel, to whom the world is indebted for these invaluable fruits of Melanchthon's labors,[1] makes the following statement: "When the university was reöpened, after the Schmalcald war, on account of there being many Hungarians who could not understand the sermons in the German language

[1] Published under the title, "Postilla Melanthoniana h. e. Lectionum Evangelicarum. . . . Explicationes piae et eruditae Philippi Melanthonis. Hanov. 1594, 95. P. I—IV. Melanchthon was never a preacher. He says expressly in 1536, *Ego concionari non possum.*

delivered in the church, Melanchthon began to explain the Gospels for their benefit, on Sundays and festivals, at his own house. Soon, on account of the multitude of hearers, he removed to the public hall these lectures or discourses, in which he was accustomed, in familiar language, to go over the principal points of the text on which the sermon had been founded. As he had had much experience in the training of the young and was furnished with the most various learning, he adapted his instructions to the capacities of his hearers, of whom there was a multitude of youth, and many who were mere boys. He was accustomed to intersperse grammatical and historical matters with the catechetical and theological, so that thereby the lecture was not only useful to all, but exciting and agreeable. There are those who recollect, that from the year 1549 to his happy departure from the present life in 1560, he delivered scarcely any lectures which were more popular than these. Though he was not used to dictate at all, but spoke with the utmost freedom so that he might proceed more rapidly and bring the exercise within the hour, still there were not wanting those who could catch and put on paper these familiar, verbal discourses; there were some even so persevering that they did not omit the subordinate points. Such was the anxiety, such the zeal at that time to hear the great teacher! Counts, barons, nobles, students of all classes and professions, the old, young men and boys in great numbers, hung on the lips of the instructer."

"It was of inestimable value to Melanchthon," says Ranke, "that he could here devote himself to subjects which filled his whole soul, and that he now found the substance of those forms to which his attention had been hitherto principally directed. He embraced with enthusiasm the theological views of Luther and, above all, his profound exposition of the doctrine of justification. But he was not formed to receive these opinions passively. He was one of those extraordinary spirits, appearing at rare intervals, who attain to a full possession and use of their powers at an early period of life. When he went to Wittenberg he was but just twenty-one. With the precision which solid philological studies seldom fail to impart, with the nice instinct natural to the frame of his mind, he seized the theological element which was offered to his grasp."

A still more extensive sphere of influence was opened to Melanchthon, by the publication of a multitude of theological writings. Most of these were the lectures which he had delivered

to his pupils, or these at least lay at the foundation of them. Luther himself chose to bring out some of these lectures surreptitiously, rather than permit them to be confined to the narrow limits of the lecture-room. Hence, without the knowledge of the author, he published Melanchthon's Exposition of the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians, to which he had himself listened in the lecture-room. He thus characteristically addresses the author: "It is I who publish this commentary of yours, and I send yourself to you. If you are not satisfied with yourself, you do right; it is enough that you please us. Yours is the fault, if there be any. Why did you not publish them yourself? Why did you let me ask, command and urge you to publish to no purpose? This is my defence against you. For I am willing to rob you and to bear the name of a thief; I fear not your complaints or accusations."

Melanchthon was the first to whom the Protestant church are indebted for what can be properly styled a Manual or System of religious doctrines. His labors in this department of theology were of the highest value. The origin of the volume to which we refer was, in a sense, entirely accidental. In his lectures on the Epistle to the Romans, he had drawn up for the benefit of his hearers a summary of the most important topics handled by the apostle. This little abstract was printed by some of his pupils without his approbation or knowledge. As soon as he perceived its imperfections, he determined to publish it in an enlarged and more complete form. Thus originated his Loci Communes, first printed in Wittenberg in 1521.[1] Wherever in Germany, any desire had been awakened for the Reformation of the church, this volume received a warm welcome. Luther especially, was almost beside himself for joy. "The book deserves," he exclaimed, "not only immortality but to be admitted among the canonical books. Whoever would now become a theologian has great advantages, for in the first place, he has the Bible which is now so clear that he can understand it without difficulty. Then let him read Philip's Loci Communes, so that he will have the whole of it by heart. When he has these two things, he is a theologian whom neither the devil nor any heretic can pull down, and the whole of theology stands open before him, so that he

[1] The full title is, Loci Communes Rerum Theologicarum, seu Hypotyposes Theologicae. Auctore Phil. Melanch. In 1821, Augusti published an edition of this work, at the completion of the third century from the publication of the 1st edition, with notes historical and literary.

can peruse for edification what he will. Then, if he pleases, he may read Philip's Commentary on Romans, and may subjoin my Commentaries on Galatians and Deuteronomy, and thus gain a copious stock of words. You can find none among all his books, where the sum of religion is exhibited in finer proportions than in the Loci Communes. Read all the fathers and sententiaries, you will find nothing to be compared with it. There is no better book, after the Bible, than this."

The first edition was immediately exhausted, and two more editions were demanded the same year. Up to 1526,—five years—the treatise had been printed *fifteen* times in Latin and *ten* in German, with but few important alterations. In the mean time, as Melanchthon was acquiring more learning and experience and a sounder judgment, some points appeared to him to need an entire, others a partial revision. In 1535, a new edition appeared under the title of Loci Communes theologici. This was in many respects a new work. It was dedicated to Henry VIII. of England, in order to conciliate his favor towards the Lutherans. The king received it graciously and sent the author two hundred ducats.[1] The work in this form passed through, in seven years, *twelve* editions in Latin and *seven* in German. The translation into the vernacular language was made by Justus Jonas. The work was subjected in 1540 to another thorough emendation, especially in the definitions of ecclesiastical terms. In this third form, it was published, during the author's life, *twenty-four* times in Latin, and at the close of 1625, it had been published *thirty-three* times in Latin and *thirteen* in German.

Among the more important works of a theological character which Melanchthon published, were the following: on the Nicene Creed; Defence against Eck; Oration for Luther; Apology for Luther against the decision of the Paris theologians; answers to the impious Articles of the Bavarian Inquisition; also, various works against Flacius, Osiander, Stancar and others; the Augsburg Confession and its Defence, published in 1530, and a greatly improved edition of the same in 1540; Opinions of some of the Ancient Fathers relating to the Lord's Supper; a treatise respecting the authority of the Church and the Writings of the Ancients; and the Confession of the Doctrinal Belief of the Saxon Churches, published in 1551.

[1] This dedication caused Melanchthon some trouble. Luther was not wholly pleased with it. In 1540, Melanchthon wrote: "Let us stop praising the English Nero."

In tone and style, Melanchthon's later writings were not equal to his earlier. For example, his Apologies for Luther, published in 1521, are characterized by great elegance, spirit and freshness of diction, while some of his productions of a later date are too diffuse and scholastic. This prolixity was sometimes reprehended by Luther. It appears to have been occasioned, in part, by the anxieties and sorrows with which his advancing years were afflicted.

No one had a more thorough conviction of the importance of logical order in thinking and writing, than Melanchthon. In his view, the first requisite for a theologian was the ability to develop a subject methodically. Hardly anything did he more abhor than that confused and promiscuous collocation of topics which appeared in the productions of some of his contemporaries. In the attainment of a just method in writing on theological subjects, his studies in philosophy were of eminent service.

Perspicuity was another quality which he highly esteemed and earnestly sought. "It is in vain," he remarks, "to expend the utmost pains in science, if we never attain the power clearly to present the thoughts of the soul." This art he viewed as the more necessary in a theologian, from the fact that he can attain his object not so much by a sudden excitement of the passions as by repeated and thorough instruction. Hence, in his later writings, one can very rarely detect anything of an hyperbolical and extravagant nature. "I love," he says, "the exact expression, and I call out aloud in the school daily, that every one should take pains to select appropriate language. I wish that none would ever follow me when I make use of terms which are not pertinent; I am a very severe judge to myself, and I commend others who employ a vigorous censorship." By this appropriateness of style he meant a clear, natural and popular method of address, alike intelligible to the learned and unlearned. This perspicuity, which he so much valued, was greatly promoted, in his own case, by his disrelish for innovations or novelties in theological terms,—a feeling which the German of the present day is not too prone to cherish. Xenophon relates that when Hippias came to Athens to hear Socrates and had asked him what he taught in particular, the philosopher replied: "The same things concerning the same," and subjoined, "But thou, since thou art so extraordinarily intellectual, canst perhaps always utter something new." To this incident Melanchthon often referred, in order to warn his pupils against a prurient love of novel phraseology. "Many are the

Hippiases," he remarks, "who do not say the same things in the same manner. It is the plague and curse of the church, that men are eager for change in respect to the form of its peculiar doctrines."

Melanchthon's Domestic and Social Character.

Melanchthon was married, Nov. 26, 1520, to Catherine, daughter of Jerome Crapp, burgomaster at Wittenberg.[1] Although, in this step, he followed the advice of Luther and some other friends, rather than his own judgment, yet he found so many excellent qualities in his wife, and so much happiness in the relation, that shortly after his marriage he wrote to Günther, "that he had married a woman who was certainly worthy of a better man." They had four children, Anna, Philip, George and Magdalen. Camerarius mentions that Melanchthon had always regarded little children with almost excessive tenderness. This fact would lead us to infer that his own children must have been very dear to him. We may mention two or three incidents in illustration. One morning when Melanchthon was weeping, perhaps on account of the divisions and sad state of the church, his little Anna ran up to him, and with the most artless sympathy, wiped away his tears with her little apron. "This token of her sympathy," he afterwards wrote, "went to my heart." At another time while sitting in the nursery, with one hand rocking the cradle and the other holding a book, a learned Frenchman was introduced to him; the stranger showed not a little astonishment in finding a man so distinguished in such a place. One of his daughters, having stayed from home, on a certain occasion, longer than the prescribed time, her father asked her, on her return, in a half serious, half playful way, what she would say to her mother, who would severely reprove her. The little girl, with the most bewitching simplicity, answered, "nothing." The father was greatly delighted, and used frequently to refer to it as altogether in point when he was called to meet the abuses of his enemies. In a passage of his writings, where he is showing how deeply implanted is a parent's affection for his child, he refers to the example of Agesilaus, which might be very naturally applied to himself. "One day when Agesilaus, now old, was riding on a

[1] He pointed out the day to his pupils by the lines:

A studiis hodie facit otia grata Philippus,
Nec vobis Pauli dogmata leget.

wooden horse with his son Archidamus, showing him how to perform the feat, a prince suddenly interrupted them. 'Tell no one of this, I entreat you,' said Agesilaus to the stranger, 'until you have sons of your own.'"

But the domestic happiness which Melanchthon enjoyed, was interrupted by various cares and sorrows. His son George, who was born at Jena in 1527, (the plague having compelled the family to remove from Wittenberg,) and who had become to his father an object of the utmost affection, was torn from his embrace by death when two years old. "Nothing in life," he writes, "was ever dearer to me than this child. He was endowed with extraordinary gifts. What a blow his death has inflicted upon me, words cannot describe. No sorrow, except a sense of the wrath of God, can equal that of parents in the sufferings or loss of their children. This sorrow will last as long as the mind is sane." But he was called to suffer more protracted grief by the events which followed the marriage of his eldest daughter, Anna, with George Sabinus. "For her," says Camerarius, "he had an extraordinary affection. To high intellectual endowments, she added the charms of piety and of a winning gentleness.[1] Sabinus seems to have been a vain, self-conceited and ambitious man, though by no means wanting in talent. He was a native of Brandenburg, and came in 1523, at the age of fifteen years, to Wittenberg. On account of his intellectual promise, especially in poetry, Melanchthon received him into his own house as a pupil. Afterwards he studied law and then applied himself with great zeal to the classics, till he was appointed professor of *belles lettres*, at Frankfurt on the Oder, by the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg. Two years before, Melanchthon had consented to give him his daughter Anna in marriage. But his office did not meet his ambitious aims; he aspired after something more imposing. When the duke of Prussia determined to found, in 1543, a university at Königsberg, Sabinus resolved to use all the means at his command to obtain one of the professorships. His wife, unassuming, gentle and educated at a quiet home, found her connection unhappy. In 1544, her father wrote to Camerarius as follows: "Sabinus will quit the institution at Frankfurt, because he sees how difficult it will be to satisfy the expectations of so many learned judges. He is in search of some place where he can

[1] Camerarius expresses that peculiar love which a parent has for his first-born very felicitously: "accedente etiam fortasse aliqua occultiore naturae conciliatione."

rule and whence he can reach a court life. This, you must know, is his whole aim. Perhaps it will come to this, that he will remove my daughter still further from my eyes, but I seek to content myself. Recently she complained in a letter to her mother of the faults of her husband, by which she has likewise suffered in reputation. She subjoins, that we must be silent in regard to the matter, and since she has already suffered so much, she wishes to have patience in future." Sabinus at length attained his object, and was appointed first rector of the university at Königsberg. Before he went there, his wife and children made a long visit at her father's house in Wittenberg. Melanchthon's love to her and solicitude in respect to her future circumstances appear vividly in his letters. "The journey of my daughter," he writes to Camerarius, "causes me unceasing pain and sorrow. I pray God that he will look upon our tears. Still you may see how good my daughter always is at home; she is quiet, modest, sober, not quarrelsome, and of an acute understanding." The news of her death must have reached him in March, 1547, and the thought that he could not be with her in her last hours and listen to her dying requests, opened all the fountains of sorrow within him. "I send you," he wrote to Eber of Wittenberg from Zerbst, "an account of the death of my daughter, which, whenever I read it, or only think of it, so excites my paternal feelings, that I fear I shall lose my health. The face of my weeping daughter, I cannot remove from my sight, as she was asked what she wished to have said to her parents; various feelings come over me and fill me with pain." After the death of his daughter, Melanchthon's affections were concentrated upon the four little children whom she had left. With characteristic kindness he thus addressed Sabinus: "It is my wish that we may continue to live on friendly terms; I will remain faithful. Your children at least I will regard as my own, and they are in truth also mine. I love them not less than I loved their mother. What ardent affection I had for her, many know; this is not quenched by her death; it is rather cherished by my grief and earnest longing for her. Since I know how she loved her children, her affections, I think, must be transferred to me." Sabinus complied with this request and committed his four children, three daughters and one son, to the care of their grand-parents. These became the joy and comfort of Melanchthon's declining years.[1]

[1] He calls them *filias nostras dulcissimas*. The youngest he sometimes named, on account of her wit, *frau doctorinas*. Sabinus married, in 1548, a

Melanchthon's second daughter, Magdalen, was married in June, 1550, to Caspar Peucer, doctor of medicine,[1] a learned and excellent man. After the death of his father-in-law, he occupied the first place among the Professors of the university at Wittenberg, and became physician in ordinary to the Elector of Saxony. Subsequently, he suffered severe persecution; being suspected by the eager partizans of Lutheranism of entertaining the views of those who were termed Crypto-Calvinists. At a period when the best Protestants understood so little the great principles of religious freedom, he was thrown into prison, where he lay twelve years, and during which his wife died. He was married, after his release, to a widow, and passed the rest of his days at Zerbst. But "the iron had entered so deeply into his soul," that he was often seen to weep during the hours of public worship.

Melanchthon's second son, Philip, resembled his father in goodness of heart, but was inferior in intellectual endowments. He was a lawyer, and at the time of his death, was *protonotary* of the University of Wittenberg. He died at eighty years of age, childless. Melanchthon's wife died while he was absent at Worms, two years before his own death. He was not able to see her in her illness, nor to be present at her funeral. She had been very infirm for a long time and had earnest desires to depart and be with Christ. Her mind, in her last days, was clear and tranquil, and she was cheered by her union with her Redeemer and with the hope of eternal felicity. Camerarius thus sums up her character: "She was a very pious woman, entirely devoted to her husband. A very careful and industrious housewife, kind towards all. In bestowing gifts upon the poor, she not only made use of her own means, but earnestly solicited aid from her friends. She was a woman of the greatest disinterestedness, and in her uniform anxiety to copy the good works of the "holy women" of old, practised an extraordinary economy."[2]

Melanchthon's gentleness is exhibited in his method of educat-

second wife, daughter of a senator at Königsberg. Melanchthon was delighted in hearing that her features resembled those of his deceased daughter, inferring, as he was disposed to do, that she might also have the same loveliness of character.

[1] "Te oro," says Melanchthon writing to Camerarius, "etiam adolescentis Peuceri causa, qui te tanquam patrem veneratur, ut ad ritum publicum et communem precationem usitatam in nuptiis venias."

[2] Her husband mentions that she did not buy a single new garment from her marriage in 1520 till 1524. In this respect, she conformed entirely to the judgment and example of Melanchthon.

ing his children. Love, kindness and patience were substituted for sharp discipline. "Mercy," he said in reference to this subject, "rejoiceth against judgment," and "blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." Mild principles and methods of proceeding, he used to maintain, are more effectual than the severity which was then so common. His views and practice, as might be expected, did not precisely accord with those of Luther. Yet the latter was by no means wanting in a playful and affectionate tenderness towards his children, as his letters abundantly show. "I recollect," says Melanchthon, "that when Martin, Bugenhagen, Jonas, Amsdorf and I were sitting together, and talking at large on the love of parents towards their children, Amsdorf exclaimed: 'I know, I know what it is.' Martin, interrupting him, said: 'you know nothing about it.' Amsdorf had never been married."[1]

In his connections with his numerous friends, Melanchthon exhibited the same unvarying benignity. "There is nothing in life sweeter and more grateful," he remarks, "than the reciprocal kindnesses of friends. Seneca beautifully expresses it, when he says: 'I would not desire wisdom if I must possess it alone.'" Spalatin, Jonas, Cruciger, Bugenhagen, Dietrich, Brenz, Myconius and Baumgärtner were among the friends whom he most cordially loved and honored. But there was one who was dear above all and formed, as it were, the other pole of his life. This was Joachim Camerarius, Professor at Leipsic, and afterwards Melanchthon's biographer. For a period of forty years, not the slightest shade obscured the brightness of their friendship. As often as his circumstances permitted, Melanchthon left what he called his "work house," and rode to Leipsic to enjoy the society of him whom he denominated his other self, *dimidium animae meae.* In 1542, when he heard of the breaking out of the plague at Leipsic, he wrote: "I entreat you to come hither with your wife and family. They can live with us quite conveniently. The large chamber and bed-room stand empty. My wife and daughters wish for intercourse with your family. The expense will not be great." Subsequently, a daughter of Camerarius was

[1] In 1543, Melanchthon wrote to Aemilius, who was mourning the loss of a child, "I have felt what these wounds are, I recollect that Luther last year, when his daughter Magdalen died, remarked that he could not have believed that the sorrows of parents in the loss of children were so sharp as he had found them to be."

married and went to reside at Wittenberg.[1] Thenceforth the two families lived on terms of almost daily intercourse.

Melanchthon put up with the weaknesses and faults of his friends in a spirit of extraordinary patience and considerateness. When reviled, he reviled not again. His early colleague, John Agricola, treated him for a long time, with great asperity. Yet after all, Melanchthon could write to him thus: "I affirm in truth that I have ever loved you, and that I wish that our mutual good will may continue uninterrupted; at least in eternity it will be pleasanter, if our friendship, begun here, should exist unbroken." Minor differences in religious opinions were of little account with him, provided the essential articles of faith were believed. In 1546, writing to Musculus, he says, "I think that all connected in this university, and of one mind on the main doctrines, ought to be mutual friends, though in the explanation of less important points, one may express himself more, another less correctly." In his correspondence which was most extensive, reaching to every part of Europe, Melanchthon made it a special object to show a disinterested spirit, and to use conciliatory language, so that all Protestants might be heartily united, and present an unbroken front against the assaults of their wily adversary.

Modesty and Gentleness of Melanchthon.

With all his learning and high reputation, Melanchthon was distinguished for humility and the most unassuming manners. In 1527, he wrote: "My desire is to be useful to youth who are pious and zealous in study; when I was yet young, I had no other aim. At least while employed in sacred studies, I never had it for an object to awaken admiration on acccount of my abilities; this only appeared important to me, that I should perform what becomes a reasonable man, namely, to gain a more exact acquaintance with divine truth." When looking back on his life, near its close, he could affirm, "I have labored in my office, so far as God has given me ability, to promote the philosophical education of youth, and I have not sought in this instruction, a splendid name." In one of his lectures, he remarks: "A doctor is one who is indirectly called of God, whose vocation it is to teach, not to administer the sacraments, who has not the power

[1] This lady died in 1558. Her last words "God will not forsake me," Melanchthon could never forget. On his own dying bed he spoke often and dreamed of her.

of governing as a pastor has, but who is under the pastor, *as I am.*" When excessive compliments or honors were tendered him, as was sometimes the case, he could hardly restrain feelings of indignation. "I have no pleasure," he writes to one, "in that extravagant praise which you shower upon me with both hands. I must be very arrogant to take it to myself."

Nearly allied to the quality to which we have alluded, was gentleness, or mildness. Sudden bursts of anger were not indeed altogether foreign to him, but the feeling quickly disappeared like some light cloud, that for a moment obscures the face of the sky. Love of peace was innate; envy, hatred and contention were his abhorrence. "Patient silence" was his motto; simple exhibition of the truth, without passion, was his practice. "I will make no answer to reproaches," he writes, "but I will follow the words of the Psalmist, 'they cursed, but I entreated.' Many grievous disorders, says Celsus, are cured by abstinence and quiet. Beautiful is the observation of Cyprian: 'He is not unhappy who hears insulting language, but he who utters it.' No music is sweeter than patiently to bear reproaches. Nobly says Euripides, 'that when two men are contending and one becomes angry, wisdom dwells with him who remains silent.'" Still, Melanchthon on some occasions, made use of delicate raillery, and of language which implied the strongest disapprobation of the views of his opponents.

It would not be strange, if the habitual mildness of the great Reformer sometimes degenerated into weakness, which might tempt him to compromise the truth, or shrink from declaring it when it was unpopular. Much has been written by the zealous Lutherans in condemnation of his timidity, and of his disposition to falter in his path, if not to return to communion with Rome.[1] There was doubtless some ground for these charges. The impression of his weakness, in this particular, which is so prevalent, must have had some foundation in truth, yet there were not wanting great occasions when the lamb became a lion, and exhibited a courage worthy of Luther. It was in the conferences at Augsburg, says Mosheim, that the character of Melanchthon appeared in its true colors. Here the votaries of Rome exhausted their efforts to gain over to their party this pillar of the Reformation, whose abilities and virtues added such a lustre to the Protestant cause. Under the influence of mild and generous

[1] Mayer published a dissertation in 1695, entitled De nimia lenitate Melanchthonis, and Schumacher one in 1700, De Timore Phil. Melanch.

treatment, he was apt to sink into a kind of yielding softness, but when he was addressed in imperious language and menacing terms, he was firm as a rock. A spirit of intrepidity animated all his words and actions, and he looked down with contempt upon the threats of power and the fear of death. The truth is that in this great man, a soft and yielding temper was joined with the most inviolable fidelity and to the most invincible attachment to the truth. After the Protestant Confession had been presented to the Council, the cardinal Campegius inquired of Melanchthon, if he still persisted in his opinion. He replied that neither he nor his associates could abandon the known truth, and he besought him not to denounce their sentiments, but to allow them to avow what they could never deny with a good conscience. Campegius answered, "I cannot allow it, for the successor of Peter is infallible." "Well then," rejoined Melanchthon, "we commend ourselves and our concerns to God. If *He* be for us, who can be against us? We shall await with patience whatever may happen to us. In our provinces, there are above forty thousand persons, including poor ministers, their families and parishioners, whose spiritual interest we cannot abandon, but will do whatever we are able for them, praying for the help of Jesus Christ whose cause we embrace; and in our calling we are prepared to labor with patience and endure all difficulties. If it be necessary, we would, if such be the will of God, rather fight and die than betray so many souls." In the Conference at Worms, in 1540, he exhibited the most determined courage. "While the Spanish and French soldiers stood before the door," he said, "I would not assent to the ambiguous articles." "With clear and noble words," says Dr. Goldstein, "Melanchthon expounded many dark passages, and with that earnest and uncommonly sweet voice of his, made, I know not how, a deep impression on the feelings." In the following year, at Regensburg, the emperor found fault with his great pertinacity and vehemence. The following proof of his personal courage is mentioned. In the evening of June 3, 1555, a band of students appeared with tumultuous noises before his house. He armed himself with a huntsman's spear, and in company with his servant, went down to them in the street, and in a determined manner, ordered silence. All obeyed, except a Polish Knight, who rushed upon him with a drawn sword. Melanchthon, nothing daunted, vigorously and successfully defended himself.

Melanchthon's Piety.

Piety was at the basis of Melanchthon's character. The fear of God was the animating motive, without which his great intellectual endowments would have lost their worth. "We live," he writes, "because God blows upon us wonderfully with his breath, not through any power of nature. This I myself experience." "The same feelings with which we enter the house of God, ought to accompany us to the school, so that we may here learn and be able to communicate divine things. Over the entrance to many old churches, stands the inscription, hewn in stone, 'My house is a house of prayer.' This should also be inscribed upon the school-house, since schools are a part of public religious service, and therein we teach and learn the truth; and prayer should be connected therewith." Melanchthon had the greatest delight in the public worship of God, especially in the singing of hymns. In his own house, his piety shone forth in a very attractive manner. Indeed he found little there to try his feelings. His wife, children, grandchildren and his aged servant, John, were among those who feared the Lord and rejoiced to do his will.[1] As soon as he awoke in the morning, he offered a short prayer, after a prescribed form. He then read that passage in the Scriptures which was designated in the formularies of the church. He was much, though not superstitiously attached to the Lord's Prayer, and other prescribed portions of the church symbols. Among his favorite texts of Scripture, were John, 10: 27—29, "My sheep hear my voice," etc.; John 14: 23, "If a man love me," etc.; John 17: 20, 21, "Neither pray I for these alone," etc.; and, as might be anticipated, 1 John 4: 16, "God is love, and whosoever dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him." But it is unnecessary to refer to other facts and incidents which illustrate Melanchthon's religious character. The spirit with which he was actuated and the whole tenor of his life, attest the depth of his religious convictions. The dispositions which he exhibited in controversy and in the presence of princes and emperors, were a surer indication of true piety, than any fervor of zeal or boldness

[1] Melanchthon, writing to Dietrich, says: "Your sermons respecting the sufferings of the Son of God, I have not yet read, but I will read them diligently. My servant, *who is eager to peruse such writings*, greatly approves them."

of confession. Foes as well as friends, bear witness to his attractive and almost faultless example.

Religious Belief of Melanchthon.

There were some events in the history, and several traits in the character of this Reformer, which would lead us to predict with some assurance the characteristics of his theological belief. One of these facts was the elegant classical training which he had received. He, whose mind was imbued with the spirit of Homer and Cicero, would view almost every topic of revelation in a different light from that of many of his contemporaries. The intimate friend of Reuchlin and Erasmus could not be confined in scholastic trammels. The liberalizing influences of an acquaintance with Greek literature especially, must have diffused themselves over his theological speculations. Again, fairness was a characteristic of Melanchthon's mind. Though familiar with the dialectics of the schools, he had no inclination to entangle an opponent with sophisms, or to gain a cause by any other method than that of open and honest argument. In this respect he excelled all the Reformers. Truth, not victory, was so manifestly his object, that he conciliated the esteem and love of not a few who would have been otherwise hostile to the Reformation. His countenance and entire aspect were an index of candor and freedom from prejudice. His uncommon amiableness of disposition would naturally keep him aloof from those who would be esteemed the most rigidly orthodox. He was not formed by nature to tread precisely in the steps of the bishop of Hippo, nor give an unconditional adhesion to the lawgivers at Wittenberg or Geneva. His ardent love of truth would preserve him from being a time-server; his loving heart would not coälesce with any bigoted religionist.

From these considerations we should expect that Melanchthon would believe both declarations of Holy Writ, "thy word is a lamp to my feet," and "the heavens declare the glory of God." Not only the fanatical sect of Anabaptists, but many high Lutherans, rejected every evidence for the divine attributes from those sciences which do not stand in immediate connection with theology. They contended that the reason of man is altogether blinded by the fall, and that man before his conversion, which is effected by mere mercy, can know nothing of God. But antiquity,

with its noble characters, with its fine conceptions on morals and law, and with its aspirations after religious truth, spoke too loudly and clearly to allow Melanchthon to shut his ears. He believed that there were sparks of that divine light, though feeble and weak, which originally belonged to man in full measure. "Philosophers like Plato, Xenophon and other learned and well principled men," he says, "what did they think of God? Did they mark at all his existence? Certainly, they believed that there is a God. How did they come to this belief? By considering the human soul itself, and then the structure of the universe. You know that in philosophy there are convincing proofs, that the world did not originate by accident, but that it proceeded from one, eternal, creative mind."

At the same time, in upholding the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, as undiscoverable by human reason and as indispensable to the salvation of the soul, no one was more decided than Melanchthon. His teachings give no countenance to modern rationalism. He held fast to the great doctrine of the Protestants, that the Bible is the only authentic rule of faith and practice. Christ, as the truth itself, could not err. His apostles also spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

In the early periods of his theological life, Melanchthon was altogether disinclined to indulge in speculations on the mysteries of Christianity. The extent to which the scholastics had carried their hypotheses, utterly useless as most of these were, deterred him from giving any countenance to their example. At a later day, his opinion was somewhat changed, when the danger of the reëstablishment of the scholastic philosophy was much diminished. He thought that by the temperate use of analogies from the material world, light might be thrown upon the doctrines of Christianity. In this respect, he copied the ancient fathers, particularly Augustine, whose writings he highly valued.

The truths which centre around the cross of Christ, were the object of Melanchthon's profoundest admiration and most ardent love. "All creatures," he remarks, "throughout eternity, will contemplate with the highest wonder, this union of justice and mercy. The reason is astonished at it and sinks to the ground. The theme is so great that were the universe, all angels and all men but one intellect, they could not comprehend its magnitude." But it is unnecessary to go at large into a subject, which is handled at length in the general histories of the Reformation,

and especially, since he has left such clear statements of his opinions in his Loci Communes and other writings.

It may be well, however, to advert to two or three topics, on which Melanchthon's views underwent, in the course of his public life, considerable change. These topics were Grace, Free-will, Predestination and the Presence of Christ in the Supper. The causes of this change appear to have been the influence of his constitutional temperament, more exact study, an increasing acquaintance with the Scriptures and the church fathers, the effects of Luther's disputes with Erasmus and of his own controversies with the catholic divines. His matured and final opinions may be gathered from the following statements. The doctrine of the fatalists, he contended, cannot be true, because it makes God the author of sin, e. g., of the crimes of a Paris, a Nero and of like men, and because it would render prayer wholly useless. The nature of the freedom of which man is now in possession, he sought to illustrate in the following manner. There are two species or modes of power or authority in man, which he names a *despotic* and a *political*. The first accomplishes what it wills, unconditionally; the other, indirectly and conditionally. God has impressed both forms on the nature of man. The despotic has respect to the control of the external members; the political, to restraining the inclinations of the heart. The last is almost wholly destroyed by Adam's fall. The heart has become blinded and obstinate, continually inclined to sin, so that there are only transient and feeble resolutions elicited for that which is good. But the despotic, though weakened by the destruction of the political, still essentially exists. The bodily members *must* move, or remain at rest, according to the will of the individual. One has the power to partake of, or refuse, the cup handed to him. A thief is under no necessity of stealing. In answer to the question, whether man is entirely passive in conversion, he says, if it were so, the change would be effected by force; there would be nothing said of effort or striving on our part, and conversion would be accomplished as water is poured into a vessel. Such imaginations are to be set aside; indeed experience itself refutes them, because conversion is not attained without a great struggle, and this attests that man is not simply passive. The Holy Spirit does not act in man as in a stock that does nothing, but he so draws and turns man, that he, i. e. the Holy Spirit wills that there should be some action of the will in adults and intelligent persons, which shall accompany his own agency. Pharaoh and Saul

opposed God, not by compulsion, but voluntarily. David freely confessed his crime and turned unto the Lord. Facts correspond with the old saying, *praecedente gratia, comitante voluntate.* Chrysostom says: "God draws, but he draws the willing." In respect to predestination, Melanchthon affirms, God has from eternity determined, of his mercy, to make those happy who believe his word. Our happiness is not grounded on our works or on our holiness, but on the immovable foundation of the Divine mercy. For every man this must be an inexhaustible source of consolation and joy. Thus it is clear, that the ground of predestination does not differ from that of justification. In the later editions of his Loci Communes, Melanchthon lays down the three following propositions: 1. Election is not to be judged of from reason, or the law, but from the gospel. 2. The whole number of the saved are elected on account of Christ. Wherefore, unless we include a recognition of Christ, we can affirm nothing of election. 3. We are not to seek one cause of justification and another of election. In respect to the presence of Christ in the Supper, Melanchthon writes as follows: "The bread, which we break, is that external, visible thing by which we are made partakers and members of the body of Christ; in the same manner as it is said, the gospel is the power of God, i. e. it is that thing or instrument by which God works. The words, the cup is the New Testament in my blood, are used metonymically, and one is reminded of the expression *fasces sunt imperium Romanum.* Christ is present in his own Sacrament, not because a priest there effects a change, or because there is power in the words to transform the thing, but because he most freely wills to be present at a rite which he has instituted, just as the Holy Spirit is most freely present in baptism." Peucer, Melanchthon's son-in-law, adduces the following reasons for the rejection of Luther's view of the Sacrament, in which reasons Melanchthon undoubtedly coincided: 1. It subverts the plain teaching of the Bible respecting the nature, particularly the human nature of Christ. 2. It strengthens, in fact, however it may be disguised in words, the whole foundation on which the superstition and follies of the Romish mass rest. 3. It increases among the common people the erroneous and pernicious opinion that this Sacrament, by itself, is a means of grace, whether the partaker truly repents and believes or not.

Estimation in which Melanchthon was held.

We may here advert to two or three incidents, which indicate the exalted reputation which this unassuming scholar and Reformer enjoyed. In 1535, he received an earnest invitation from Francis I. king of France, to repair to his court for the purpose of consultation on existing disputes in religion. The elector of Saxony could not, however, be prevailed upon to permit Melanchthon to accept the invitation, though he earnestly desired to do so. About the same time, Dr. Robert Barnes was sent by Henry VIII. of England, with letters of invitation to Melanchthon, to visit England. Henry offered him ample security from all molestation and even hostages if he required it. This invitation was subsequently renewed. Luther, in this case, was averse to it. At a later period, Melanchthon was occupied with the care of the churches and academical establishments in Misnia. He also took an active part in managing the affairs of the university of Leipsic. He was, likewise, consulted in relation to measures for the improvement of the university of Tübingen. Urgent invitations were at various times tendered to him to become a professor at Tübingen, Ingolstadt and other seats of learning.

Melanchthon as a Biblical Expositor.

"Every good theologian," says Melanchthon, "and true interpreter of the celestial doctrine, must of necessity, be first a grammarian, then a logician, and finally a witness." Acquaintance with the Biblical languages was of indispensable importance to the Reformers. In no other way could they thoroughly expose the unfounded pretensions of the papacy. Hence this species of knowledge was regarded by the Romanists with special aversion. "In the Netherlands," says Melanchthon, "the Italians affirm that if a man be a good grammarian, he will necessarily be a heretic." Melanchthon was consequently led to devote himself, with great energy, to the study of the biblical languages. "It is very little," he remarks, "which I know of languages, yet this little I esteem so highly, that I would not part with it for a kingdom. A very great benefit is this gift of tongues, inasmuch as thereby one can repair to the sources; otherwise, how can he attain to any certainty." "Alas for those who come to the study of the Bible without the aid of other branches of knowledge.

They seem to me like birds that would fly without wings." "As no one, destitute of light, can discern the difference of colors, so without an acquaintance with style, the whole Bible will remain unknown." Unlike many of his contemporaries, Melanchthon clearly perceived the value of Hebrew for the interpretation of the New Testament. "Though the works of the apostles," he writes, "are written in Greek, yet the Greek idiom is mingled with many Hebrew phrases and figures. In order to come to a full knowledge of the New Testament, the study of Hebrew must be pursued in the Church." With the same general object in view, the Reformer edited an edition of the Septuagint, which was published in Basil in 1545; rightly perceiving that a knowledge of this translation, which our Lord and his apostles so often refer to, would be of essential aid to a correct understanding of the Gospels and Epistles. At the same time, archaeology and particularly biblical geography, were not neglected. "I often remind you," says this zealous teacher to his scholars, "that you must look out these places on the map of Palestine, not only to obtain light on the text, but to excite your feelings, for things which are *seen* make a deeper impression." Melanchthon, also, in opposition to the practice of the scholastics, was fully aware of the importance of ascertaining the meaning of the Bible by a simple interpretation of the text and by a diligent collation of the context.[1]

A second qualification of the exegete, in the Reformer's opinion, was a knowledge of the principles of rhetoric and logic. By a continued study of the Scriptures, he was convinced, that he could not come to a correct acquaintance with many passages, especially in the writings of Paul, without understanding the course of thought and the logical connection. "It is my opinion," he remarks, "that the words of Paul can be best understood, when we have respect to the course and ordering of the thoughts. It is self-evident, that Paul did not write without connection and a sequence of thoughts. He has passages in which he prepares the feelings of the reader for what is to follow. He has his own peculiar art in teaching and narrating, and if one will not pay regard to this in his expositions, what else will he do but that which Chrysostom says, 'fight in the dark,' (*νυκτομαχεῖν*)!"

In the third place a biblical interpreter must be a witness. By

[1] It was then common to try to find four senses in every passage of the Bible, the literal, tropical, allegorical and anagogical.

this the Reformer intended that piety was indispensably necessary to an interpreter of the Bible. He only can properly expound the words given by divine inspiration, to whose heart the Holy Spirit has imparted a witness of their truth. This is now technically termed the theological element. "Spiritual things," he somewhere remarks, "cannot be apprehended when our hearts are not awakened and taught by the Holy Spirit."

It may here be remarked, that Melanchthon, like Calvin, has but few references in his writings to preceding commentators. He prefers generally to give his own views of a passage, unencumbered with learned quotations and references. He was not at all inclined to copy, like many of his servile contemporaries, the Christian fathers. "Jerome," he writes, "was a learned man and had in Palestine teachers well-skilled in Hebrew. You ought highly to esteem him, and not, as some asses do, despise everything which has come down from others. That he translated the Bible is a matter of great importance, and for it he cannot be enough thanked. But did he not often err? What man does not mistake? What folly to imagine that a man can be without error! We sometimes mistake, when we are employed in interpreting our own language. We ought to derive advantage from the errors of great men, for human reason cannot discern everything. *Interdum quoque bonus dormitat Homerus.*"

It should be mentioned, that our Reformer, notwithstanding all his excellences as an interpreter, was too much disposed to resort to the allegorical methods of interpretation which were then so much in vogue. He ever felt great interest in small enigmas, ambiguities of speech, playful turns in a sentence, etc. Rhyming even in matters altogether prosaic, was a favorite amusement. At the last Christmas festival of his life, he made, for the use of his hearers, a little poetic paraphrase of 1 Chron. 18: 17. This trait or tendency in Melanchthon's mind was a principal cause of his finding allegories and a double sense in certain passages of the Bible, and especially in the ritual ceremonies of the Old Testament. It should be added, that he did not in general apply this method to the weightier matters of doctrine.

The high opinion which Luther entertained of Melanchthon's commentaries has already been referred to. Brenz, writing in 1527, says: "The learned commentaries of Philip Melancthon on the Gospel of John are found in the hands of all." Afterwards, when the Reformer deviated from some points in the Lutheran creed, his commentaries were less esteemed, till finally they seem

to have sunk into general neglect. Since the middle of the last century, attention has been again directed to them. Such men as Mosheim, Ernesti and Semler warmly commended them. They are now established in the general favor, though they are somewhat overshadowed by the greater popularity of the writings of Luther and Calvin.

Melanchthon as a Church Historian.

Melanchthon had a signal advantage in the study of history in his extraordinary memory. He often refers, in his letters, with enthusiasm to the great events of antiquity. While he was at Tübingen, the work of Naucler, which then enjoyed a high reputation, was printed by Thomas Anselm. The editing of this book, as well as the correction of the press, was entrusted to Melanchthon. Later he edited a portion of the general history of the same author, and also partly prepared for the press an edition of Cario's Chronicon, which, for a long time, had great currency in the schools. But to the history of the church of Christ, Melanchthon directed his attention with special interest. "It is necessary," he writes, "to be acquainted with church history. As a Roman citizen ought to know the history of the Roman State, and every man the history of the things relating to his profession, be he a physician or a warrior, so must the Christian understand the history of the church." "When I was a boy I read much in a book which was written in Greek, and which treated of the history of the apostles and of other saints. Reuchlin had it in his library. I have seen nothing better. It was a MS. whose antiquity was undoubted. The reading of Greek caused me, when I was a boy, no difficulty, and I found joy in it, if I could only learn something of church history."

In 1522, he wrote to Spalatin: "We have from the same library (that at Worms) from which Theophylact was sent to us, some volumes of Chrysostom, as well as a large part of Basil, and not a little of Gregory Nazianzen." He was soon induced to make more extended researches into the field of church and doctrinal history, by the theological controversies which sprung up. The Sacramentarian dispute compelled him to institute a more exact inquiry into the teachings of the Christian fathers on this subject. The fruits of these investigations appeared in 1530, in his Sententiae Veterum aliquot Patrum de Coena Domini. In his Postils there are numerous indications of his intimate

and entensive acquaintance with the Christian fathers. For example, there are notices of the Manichaeans, Donatists and Pelagians, of the distinctions between bishops, priests, deacons and acolytes, of the destruction of Jerusalem, etc. His acquaintance with the early church is further proved by his book, published in 1539, De Ecclesiae Auctoritate et de Veterum Scriptis. By this valuable publication, he took his position as the forerunner and leader of all the Protestant church-historians. The first part is entirely doctrinal, in which the author treats of the relation of the doctrines of the fathers to those of the Bible. He then takes up at length the four oecumenical councils, Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon. In this discussion, he decides against the orthodoxy of Nestorius and Eutychus, contending that they had embraced the fundamental errors which had been before condemned in Paul of Samosata. He then considers the doings and decrees of eight of the more important provincial Synods. The church fathers, whose doctrines he examines, are Origen, Dionysius, Tertullian, Cyprian, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustin and Gregory the Great. The doctrines, which he particularly examines are the trinity, justification by faith and the Lord's supper. The millennial notions of Tertullian he denounces as Jewish figments. Melanchthon introduces but few critical remarks on the genunineness of the writings which pass under review.

The Relations of Melanchthon to Luther.

The mutual connection of these distinguished Reformers is a matter of no little interest. The warmth of their early love for each other was in later times, as is well known, considerably diminished. Though no open rupture ever took place, yet it is sad to know that the bright chain of friendship which once connected the "dear Martin" to the "dear Philip" lost any of its lustre. But so it was. And it may not be uninstructive to trace the subject a little in detail. This will prove that the timidity of Melanchthon, was not the sole cause of the altered relations of the two friends.

We have already referred to the affectionate reception with which the young Tübingen scholar was welcomed in 1518 by Luther at Wittenberg. The warmth of their reciprocal love and esteem did not abate for several years. It may be well to quote a few of the ardent expressions found in their correspondence. In

1518, Luther playfully wrote, "To Philip Melanchthon, Schwarzerd, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, German, but never a barbarian." "Our Philip Melanchthon," he writes to Reuchlin, "is a wonderful man, yea hardly anything can be found in him which is not more than human; still he confides in me and befriends me in the highest degree." In this correspondence, it is interesting to observe how the fiery and robust spirit of Luther had made the deepest impression on his gentle and loving friend. So great was Melanchthon's zeal for theology, so glowing his hatred of the corruptions of popery, and so keen was the language with which he publicly defended Luther, that the enemies of the Reformation began to think that they had two Ajaxes to deal with instead of one. Melanchthon thus appeals to Hess of Breslau: "Where is now that Christian courage? Where is thine early heroism of soul, that thou now remainest silent, though thou knowest that piety and truth are on the side of Luther!" So vigorous were the blows that Melanchthon dealt out in defence of his friend, and against Eck, the Paris theologians and others, that the great Reformer began to think that he was destined to play but a secondary part. In Oct. 1519, Luther wrote to Spalatin: "You have seen, or may see, the positions taken by Philip (against Eck), a little audacious but most true. He so replied as to appear a wonder to us all. If Christ pleases, he will go beyond many Martins, a most strenuous foe to the devil and scholastic theology; he knows at the same time their vain devices and the rock, Christ; thus he will be mighty." "Perhaps," addressing Lange, "I am the forerunner of Philip, for whom like Elias, I shall prepare the way in spirit and power, for the destruction of Israel and Ahab's servants." Melanchthon's love to Luther was in the mean time, growing more and more fervent. "More wonderful is Martin," he writes in 1520, "than I can portray in words. I know how much Alcibiades admired his Socrates; I admire this man in a sense altogether different, as a Christian; the oftener I look upon him, the greater he appears to me." To Reuchlin's inquiry, whether he were inclined to leave Wittenberg for Ingolstadt, he gave a decided negative. In 1520, he wrote to Hess: "I would rather die than be separated from Luther." When Luther was in the castle at Wartburg, he wrote to Spalatin: "The academical affairs, as you have learned from others, are in good hands. We only miss our father, doctor Martin. O happy day when I shall once more embrace him!" And again at the news of Luther's illness: "The light

of Israel is kindled by him; were it quenched, what other hopes should we have? Therefore spare no pains to find out the best remedies for him, not only on his account, but for our sakes, yea rather only for our sakes. For I know how greatly he longs to depart and be with Christ. I have asked counsel of the physicians here; what they have answered, you will learn from the messenger. O that I could with this my poor life redeem his life, than which nothing on earth is more divine!" "Our Elias," was a common appellation which Melanchthon gave to Luther. The latter, on the other hand, called his learned friend, "Unicus θεολόγου διδασκαλίας vindex."

Under Luther's predominating influence, Melanchthon had devoted himself to theology, he hardly knew how. While in Tübingen, the thought of editing Aristotle had thrown a peculiar charm over the future. Years passed away, and with them there had been a decided alteration in his views. He did not, indeed, reject all which was then classed with philosophy; he continued to cherish the studies of medicine and the natural sciences. But he condemned in the most decided terms the physics, metaphysics and ethics of the ancients. To study these was in his opinion, not only a waste of one's talents, but positively pernicious to the religious feelings. At the same time, Melanchthon's love for classical literature was considerably abated. He now read, studied and commented almost exclusively on theological subjects, so that Luther began to regard him as his own guide and model.

But early in 1522, Melanchthon's love for theological inquiries was suddenly diminished. His letters for several years betray an increasing desire to resume his old pursuits. One cause of this change in his views, appears to have been the fanaticism which was springing up in various quarters. The doctrines of these enthusiasts had such a savor of godliness, that for a while Melanchthon himself hesitated to condemn them. But when they began to appear in their native deformity and to overrun Wittenberg, the difficulties of the young Reformer's position as a theologian began greatly to oppress his feelings. Multitudes made the doctrines of grace the cloak for the commission both of secret, and of open and revolting crimes. Luther was of course utterly opposed to these wild movements, yet it appeared to Melanchthon and others, that certain hyperbolical expressions of the Reformer gave some occasion for the prevailing disorders, or furnished fuel to the wide spreading flames. These sad events were the occasion of great sorrow and perplexity to Melanch-

thon's tender heart. He saw, with inexpressible pain, that many professed Lutherans, even preachers of the gospel, were beginning to regard ignorance of human learning as a virtue, and to despise their enlightened leaders in proportion to the amount of their learning. "I see," says the Reformer in 1522, "that elegant literature, which is no less neglected now than it was in the age of sophistry, needs many and patient teachers." Again in 1524, "The most foolish opinion which prevails in our days is, that piety consists in nothing else than a contempt for elegant learning and of all the wisdom of the ancients." In his edition of one of the works of Cicero, he indignantly exclaims, "O brazen souls that, so often invited by the weightiest voices of the good to the study of letters, are so stupid that they seem to have become divested of every trace of humanity. No dignity of learning inflames them, none of its ample fruits excite them to change their course. I wish that these pests of mankind were banished to Anticyra by public enactment, that the contagion do not spread any further." It hence appeared to him as a most sacred duty, to insist on the thorough education of the young in the sciences. In this aspect of things, he again turned his attention not only to the classics but to philosophy and to the culture of youth in schools, believing that the shameful ignorance could be expelled in no other manner.

It may be easily imagined that the relations of Luther and Melanchthon, in these circumstances, would be somewhat modified. The younger of the two friends was now returning to the studies, from which he had deviated, partly in deference to the opinions of the elder. While the one shrunk with characteristic diffidence from the stormy future which seemed to be impending, the other determined to brave the tempest. In addition, Melanchthon continued to live on the most friendly terms with Erasmus, even after Luther had vehemently denounced him. Melanchthon, indeed, deeply regretted that the Rotterdam scholar was so hesitating in his religious belief; yet on the contrary, he was of the opinion that Luther had not treated him with sufficient respect and moderation. "Our Arcesilaus," Melanchthon writes to Camerarius, in 1534, "has renewed the controversy with Erasmus, which is in truth grievous to me. The passions of both in their old age afflict me very much." Melanchthon now found his residence in Wittenberg not a little irksome. The ruling spirits there, had little sympathy for his elegant tastes or gentle nature. He felt like escaping from prison when he was

permitted to journey with his beloved friend, Camerarius of Leipsic. In his solitary studies, he became more pleased with the noble remains of antiquity, accompanied with a feeling of regret that he had ever suspended his interest in them. He was also more fully convinced, that Luther's method of exhibiting the doctrines of the gospel, though in general and substantially conformed to the Scriptures, still demanded on particular points a further development and more exact definitions.

In 1636, Melanchthon laid down, in a university exercise, the position that good works in justification are the *causa sine qua non*. Though this position in the sense in which the author understood it, was altogether correct, yet it was extremely liable to misapprehension. A certain Cordatus, a zealous adherent of Luther, first took exception to it, as he received it from Cruciger who was then leeturing on the gospel of John, and making use, as his manual, of a MS. of Melanchthon.[1] Cordatus went without delay to Luther, in order to call his attention to the "papistical errors" which would again seek a foothold in his neighborhood. Melanchthon, being then abroad, was informed by his friends of the controversy which was breaking out. He immediately wrote from Nuremberg a long letter to Luther and the other theological professors, in order to remove the objections which had been alleged. But Cordatus had, in the mean time, stirred up the whole university. It is reported that Luther publicly refuted the proposition of Melanchthon as false and erroneous, by proofs from the Scriptures. This, however, is not certainly known to have been the case. The zeal of Cordatus against Melanchthon broke forth with fresh violence, in the following year. On one occasion, he trampled the Loci Communes under his feet. Still more violent was his conduct after Melanchthon had sent a letter to a preacher at Freiberg, by the name of Schenk, in which he had given his opinion that people who live under tyrannical governments may receive without any violation of conscience, the sacrament in *one* kind. Schenk and Cordatus now united their extions, to induce the Electoral Court to adopt decisive measures against Melanchthon. Luther was somewhat agitated, but he

[1] Many of the works, which were published at Wittenberg, in the name of Cruciger, Eber, Jonas, Major and others, were written in whole or in part by Melanchthon, who appears to have been the literary *factotum* of the place. He wrote many discourses which others delivered, and it sometimes happened that while he was composing the latter portion, the orator was holding forth the first part.

did not permit his feelings to be alienated from his persecuted friend. When he heard that Melanchthon was dangerously ill at Weimar, in 1540, as he was travelling to a religious conference at Hagenau, he hastened instantly to his bedside, and by his earnest prayers and his hearty sympathies, was the means of raising up his apparently dying friend. "I perceived," says Melanchthon, afterwards, "that the teacher was in anguish of spirit, yet he repressed his own grief lest he should increase mine, and he attempted to raise my spirits, not only by consoling, but often by sharply chiding me. *If he had not come, I should have died.*"

At a later period, the position of Melanchthon was by no means to be envied. Luther, in his declining days, was no longer, in all respects, the same friendly and loving man as before. Bodily sufferings, particularly an obstinate pain in his head, had greatly depressed his spirits. After the year 1543, he expresses in nearly all his letters the earnest desire that the Lord would come at once and release him. He saw with dislike the negligence of the Court in relation to spiritual matters; with disapprobation he looked upon his colleagues in the university; the whole body of professors of law were admonished by him in a public discourse as those who made merchandise of the divine commandments. His old friend Amsdorf, bishop at Naumburg, was almost the only man, with whom intercourse was pleasant. Wittenberg seemed to him to be nothing less than Sodom and Gomorrah.

In 1543, archbishop Hermann of Cologne employed Melanchthon and Bucer to aid him in the introduction of the Reformation into his diocese. They jointly prepared a Reformation-formula, the so-called Acta Reformationis Coloniensis. This document was severely censured by Amsdorf. Luther was much displeased with the Article on the sacrament, because he looked in vain for any emphatic refutation of the views of the Swiss Reformers. "There is overmuch talk," he writes, "of the value, fruits and excellence of the sacrament, but it mumbles about the substance just as the fanatics do; therefore I have enough of it, and I am greatly displeased with it." "Luther," writes Melanchthon, "thunders and lightens against others; sometimes he aims at me. Shortly you will hear that I am banished hence, as Aristides was from Athens." The difficulties between these two great men were increased in November 1544, when the landgrave, Philip of Hesse, addressed a letter to the chancellor Brück, entreating him, in the most earnest manner, to use every exertion to bring Luther into a more friendly connection with

Melanchthon. In 1544, Bullinger of Zürich, replied to Luther's "Brief Confession of the Sacrament of the Supper." Luther was so excited by its appearance, that he resolved to put forth his doctrines in respect to the sacrament in a new and more stringent form, and it was rumored that Melanchthon would be referred to by name in it. Melanchthon complained with tears to Brück of the wretchedness of his situation. Luther did not, however, carry his plan into execution. Yet in these circumstances, a degree of estrangement between the two friends was unavoidable.

Luther died on the 18th of February, 1546. Melanchthon had accompanied him, in December 1545 and January 1546, on a journey to Mansfield, and heard him preach in Halle. He saw him, for the last time, on the 23d of January. When the melancholy news of his death reached Wittenberg, Melanchthon was filled with sorrow and consternation. The remembrance of former friendship, the consciousness of his own irreparable loss, distress for the churches now left without an earthly guide, by turns agitated his heart. These various feelings are manifest in the funeral oration for his friend, which Melanchthon delivered. His tender regard for his memory was exhibited in acts of kindness towards the widow and children. He accompanied her on her journey to Brunswick, and in various ways manifested a warm sympathy in her condition.[1]

Notwithstanding all the testimonials of unaffected sorrow which Melanchthon exhibited, some of Luther's zealous friends were not content. Their veneration for the departed Reformer amounted almost to idolatry. Not satisfied with lauding his virtues and services, they transformed the weaknesses of which he was not free, into so many grounds of eulogy, and demanded that all should render this indiscriminate homage. Melanchthon, not yielding altogether to these claims, was made the object of continued calumny and persecution. Such men as Amsdorf, Gallus, Wigand, Judex and especially Flacius, caused his life to become a constant source of sorrow, and made him long for the quiet of the grave. Wo was to him that he sojourned in Mesech, that he dwelt in the tents of Kedar. In 1555, John Stolz related how Luther had appeared to him in a dream and bitterly complained of the treachery of those who, in his life-time,

[1] She returned to Wittenberg in 1547, and again left it for Torgau in 1552, on account of the breaking out of the plague in the former place. She died at Torgau, Dec. 20, 1552, and was buried in the parish-church there.

were regarded as his best friends. On one occasion, Calvin wrote, that he knew that Melanchthon fully agreed with him in respect to the sacrament; thereupon the friends of the Lutheran view republished an earlier tract of Melanchthon's, written in support of their cause. He was thus placed between two fires; but he chose not to stir up the flames on either side, but allowed them to pass silently over him. But still his secret grief was very great. Often when he walked on the banks of the Elbe, and saw the tumult of the waves, it appeared to be a striking image of his own life. His only consolation in these cruel and reiterated attacks, was the thought that God was a witness that he was innocent. He affirmed, that he would gladly die if he could thus be the means of healing the wounds of the church. He sometimes expressed an ardent wish for death, not only that he might be free from sin and suffering, but from the madness of theologians. A few days before his death, he put down the reasons why he should not be afraid of death. On the left side he wrote: "Thou shalt depart from sin, Thou shalt be free from troubles and from the rage of theologians;" and on the right: "Thou shalt enter into light, Thou shalt see God, Thou shalt behold the Son of God, Thou shalt learn those wonderful mysteries which thou couldst not understand in this life—why we are made as we are, and of what kind is the union of the two natures in Christ.

Last Days and Death of Melanchthon.

During several of the last years of Melauchthon's life, his earthly ties had been gradually dissolving. Friend after friend had departed to the rest of the people of God. "Let us congratulate Vitus," he writes, "now removed to the delightful society of the heavenly church, and be excited by his example to prepare for the same journey." In addition to his domestic bereavements, he lost Micyllus, Menius and Bugenhagen. The last-named was one of the most eminent Reformers, and united to Luther and Melanchthon in bonds of the closest intimacy. He was, for thirty years, minister of the great church at Wittenberg, and died April 20, 1558, at the age of seventy-three.

It is delightful to see that Melanchthon's intellectual and moral powers remained unimpaired to the last. His letters, at this period, breathe the same spirit of exalted piety and disinterested love, which characterizes those of an earlier date. At the close of

March, 1560, Melanchthon went to Leipsic, in order to examine the students of divinity there, who were supported by the Elector, a duty which he had performed for many years. The weather was cold and rough, and on his return, April 5th, the bleak north wind occasioned him great inconvenience and suffering. He remarked, that he had not felt the cold so much during any time in the winter. On the night of the 7th of April, he was able to sleep but little. Towards morning, he was attacked with a violent fever and cough. Early in the morning, however, he resumed his accustomed duties, though he was so weak that he was compelled to rest from time to time on his seat. His son-in-law, Peucer, at once administered remedies but without effect. "If God will," said Melanchthon, "I will gladly die, and I pray that he will grant me a happy journey home." In the course of the day, he arose and prepared to go to the lecture-room and read a lecture on logic. All which could be said to deter him had little effect. He would read, he said, a half hour and then take the bath. When he was about to put his foot upon a little stool, his weakness was so great that he almost fell upon his knees. "Ah," he exclaimed, "my lamp is almost out." He then went to the lecture-room but ascertained that it was an hour too early. At 9 o'clock, he went again, but was able to remain only a quarter of an hour. On the following night he was visited with a severe paroxysm of the ague. Still, he could not be induced to relinquish his accustomed duties. On the 9th and 10th of April, he attended meetings of the senate of the university, and spoke earnestly and frequently against the forming of parties among the students. In the afternoon, he corrected for the press several funeral orations for Philip, duke of Pomerania, who had died on the 24th of February, remarking that another Philip would soon follow. On Thursday, April 11th, he partook of the Lord's supper in the church. On the 12th, he delivered his final lecture on the words of Isaiah, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" On the following night, he enjoyed quiet rest, and as he awoke, sung the words which he had often sung when a boy in the church, "with desire have I desired to eat this passover." About 4 o'clock, P. M. Camerarius arrived from Leipsic and found his friend sitting on the lowest step of the stair-case which led to his study, supporting his head with his elbows. During the following night, he was sleepless and feverish, and his little strength rapidly diminished. Notwithstanding, he prepared, on the following day, to deliver his lecture, when his son

Philip came in and informed him that his hearers were not assembled. The truth was, that they had assembled and had been dispersed by a notice affixed to the door, stating Melanchthon's inability to attend. On the 15th, he said to Camerarius: "I have a desire to depart and be with Christ." He then conversed with his friend on the meaning of the Greek word *ἀναλύειν*. He interpreted it as expressing a desire to remove, pass on, or set about proceeding in a journey, that is, to leave this life of toil and misery for the blessed rest of heaven. In his sleep, in the night of the 16th, he said he had dreamed of the words of Paul, "If God be for us who can be against us?" and that they had afforded him much consolation. On the 17th, when Camerarius took his leave, he bade him an affectionate farewell, saying: "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who sitteth at the right hand of the Father and giveth gifts to men, keep you and yours and all of us." On the 18th, his bed was taken, by his own request, into his library, upon which he remarked, with great cheerfulness, as he was placed upon it, "This may be called, I think, my travelling couch, if (alluding to the criticism before mentioned) I should *remove* in it." In the course of the same day, seeing one of his grandchildren near him he said: "I have loved you most tenderly; see that you reverence your parents and always try to please them and fear God, who will never forsake you. I pray you may share his constant regard and blessing. In the same spirit of tender affection he addressed all the younger branches of the family. Letters having been received from Frankfurt, relating to the miseries endured by the persecuted Christians in France, he declared that his bodily sufferings were not to be compared with the distress which he felt on account of the church of Christ.

The 19th of April was his last day on earth. He spoke much of the troubled state of the church and commended her with tears to the Son of God. After recovering from a severe paroxysm, he repeated with the greatest earnestness his accustomed prayer to the three Persons in the Godhead, and then said to Peucer, with his eyes raised to heaven, "I have been in death, but the Lord has delivered me." One present then said: "There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus," and he replied: "Christ is made unto us of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." With affecting repetition he would often say, "that they all might be one as we are one." Most of the professors and many of the students now assembled in his room. Eber, Frōschel and Sturio read, alternately, the

24th, 25th and 26th Psalms, the 53d of Isaiah, the 17th of John's Gospel, the 5th of Romans and other passages from Paul's Epistles. He then said, that the words, "as many as receive him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God," lay very near his heart. His lips then moved, and he appeared, for a long time, to be praying for himself, while those standing around preserved the deepest silence. Being asked by his son-in-law if he would have anything else, he replied: "*aliud nihil, nisi coelum,*" nothing, but heaven; and requested that he might not be further interrupted in his devotions. A second fainting-fit then seized him. Some one, supposing that the spirit had fled, called on him aloud. He replied: "Disturb not my sweet repose, for the end of my life draws near." Many of his favorite passages of Scripture were recited to him. The last word which he uttered was "yes," to the inquiry whether he had understood the passage, "Lord, into thy hand I commend my spirit." Fröschel continued to read from the Scriptures as the lips of the dying man, constantly moving seemed to respond. He ceased to breathe about six o'clock, P. M., April 19, 1560. His age was sixty-three years, three months and three days. The funeral solemnities were attended on the 21st of April. Camerarius had returned from Leipsic, but his grief would not permit him to look upon the countenance of his friend. A discourse by the superintendent Eber, and a funeral oration by Winsheim were delivered in the parish church before an immense audience who had assembled from Wittenberg, from the city and University of Leipsic and all the neighboring country. His remains, enclosed in a leaden coffin, were deposited close to those of Martin Luther.

From a collection of Greek and Latin eulogies, the following written in Latin by Theodore Beza, and which has been thus imitated in English, is selected:

Here then, MELANCHTHON, lies thy honored head,
Low in the grave among the mouldering dead!
In life 'twas thine to make all others blest,
But to thyself denying peace and rest;
Thine was the holy toil, the anxious tear,
Dear Philip! to the good forever dear!—
O earth! let lilies here profusely spring,
And roses all around their odors fling!
For rose and lily each their glories blend,
The sweet, the fair, in our departed friend!
Soft let him sleep and none disturb his rest,
None *he* disturbed while living, none oppressed!