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God, (Isa. 65: 17). And the process of this new creation has commenced. Here has already been wrought deliverance for the captive sold under sin; deliverance for the blind, the naked, the poor. Here is already poured abroad provision for all spiritual maladies and wants. The provision is complete. The last dispensation is doing its work. The great ransom is urged upon all. Draw near ye ends of the earth, and all that dwell in its uttermost corners; Jews, Gentiles, Barbarians, Scythians, bond, free; all complexions, of all climes; all degrees of intellect; kings, peasants, philosophers; wherever humanity dwells, and sins and suffers; all, draw near; here is salvation for you: forgiveness, cleansing, peace, life eternal. This is the time. "The day of vengeance is in my heart," says God; "and the year of my redeemed is come," (Isa. 63: 4). Come, then, thou earth, and do homage at thy Redeemer's feet, and live!

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#### ARTICLE IV.

##### GERMAN LITERATURE IN AMERICA.

*Select Treatises of Martin Luther, in the original German, with Philological Notes, and an Essay on German and English Etymology, by B. Sears.* Andover: Allen, Morrill, & Wardwell. 1846.

By Professor Philip Schaf, D. P., Mercersburg, Pa.

THREE centuries ago the power of the German mind shook the church and the States of Christendom to their lowest foundation. The need of a reformation, which had long before been prepared in different ways, in the most profound and noble minds, awoke with concentrated force in the bosom of an humble and conscientious, yet gigantic monk of Wittenberg, and worked itself out to a clear conviction. He was chosen by Providence to be the oracle of the times, to be the leader of all who longed for deliverance from the fetters of the second Egyptian bondage. Just such a man was needed—one who did not lightly take upon himself the responsible work of reform; who was not filled with empty dreams of liberty; who, in destroying the superstition which had gathered around the faith, would not destroy the faith itself; but

who by painful experience was acquainted with the entire system, whose fetters he was destined to break; who, with all the energy of a faithful and obedient monk, had struggled to obtain salvation through the ordinances of mediæval catholicism. He possessed therefore the indispensable requisites of a genuine reformer—an experimental knowledge of the church which was to be reformed, and a deep religious earnestness, which sought not distinction, but which labored only for the glory of God and the salvation of men. By obeying we learn how to rule; authority educates for freedom; the law is a schoolmaster unto Christ.

After this man had for years borne the burden of the ordinances of his mother-church, after he had sought in vain to work out the salvation of his soul by penance and mortification, and had only by this painful process of self-destruction come to a clearer consciousness of his sin and guilt, dawned at last his day of evangelical freedom. He had the courage to renounce all self-constituted righteousness, to cast away all the lumber of good works, so-called, all self-confidence, as offensive to God. He had the still greater courage, to cast himself with all his thoughts, feelings and will into the arms of the free and all-sufficient grace of God in Christ; and lo! in this unqualified faith in him he found at once, as an unmerited gift, all that he had before sought in his own way in vain, righteousness, repose for his troubled conscience, peace with God and with himself. Then it was that in the shameful sale of indulgences, by which the pardon of sins and peace with God were offered for a pitiful piece of money, he was brought into direct contact with that system which, in the most revolting manner profanes things the most sacred. Then, forced by his conscience and his sense of duty as a teacher in the church, he raised his thunder-voice. His word wakened echoes in all parts of Germany, but opposition also in the dominant powers of the times; in the halls of the universities, on the throne of the emperor, and in the episcopal chair of the head of Christendom. Enemy after enemy arose. The Wittenberg Augustinian had no money, no arms, in short, no outward power; but, what was more than all these, and which brought them all to shame, he had the power of faith and of the word. From the pulpit and the professorial chair he called attention to the pearl which he had found; by writings, which flew with the rapidity of lightning over all Europe, he announced to the world the central doctrine of his spiritual life, that of the justification of the sinner through the merits of Christ by faith alone, and the sweet fruit of this re-

ligious freedom. He became the Reformer of his time against his own will and in the most innocent way, one may almost say, in spite of himself. Every struggle into which he was forced became a victory for his cause. In a few years the Wittenberg movement had become the world-movement. The words, the spirit of the Reformer had become seated in the hearts of millions, and had burst forth in a flame. He no longer stood alone, nations were on his side. It was therefore no longer his work, but a part of the history of the world, which is, so to speak, at the same time the judgment of the world.

I need not mention the name of *Luther*; it is on every one's tongue. He needs no monument,—a eulogy would be too late. The history of three centuries tells us what he was; Protestantism is his indestructible monument.

And this Protestantism, what is it? Pass through Germany, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, England, Scotland, and North America, and there you will everywhere find its expression in the religious and political institutions, in the moral character of these nations, in their science and art, in their restless activity, in their uninterrupted struggle for advancement, nay, even in commerce and manufactures, in rail-ways and steam-boats, and in that scarce visible messenger of the air, which, to crown all, scorns time and space. Ask Calvinism, Puritanism, and Methodism whence their origin, and they will answer, We are only a continuation of the movement commenced in Germany in the sixteenth century. What is the declaration of the independence of '76 with its great idea of the liberty and equality of all men? Did it fall direct from heaven? No; it is only the application of the protestant principle of religious liberty to civil and social life. What gives victory, right or *wrong*, to our arms in Mexico? If you trace the cause up to its fountain-head, you will find that the power of Protestantism over a petrification of past times manifests itself even here. In short, Protestantism, however imperfect it may be at present, is the power which rules the modern world, it is the life-blood of modern history, of the present civilization: in it we all live and breathe, in so far as we really live, and do not merely vegetate.

Germany is then the birthplace of modern history, the hearth of all those ideas which govern the modern world. For this reason it has just claims upon the respect and gratitude of every protestant, and deserves to be studied by the present generation, especially by Americans.

It may be said, indeed, that the relative importance of this country in the sixteenth century, is no guarantee for the worth of her present literature. The current of the national spirit may there have become sluggish or even stagnated, as is the case in Palestine, Asia Minor, and Greece. This bare possibility, however, has here no application at all. For every one who is at all acquainted with the case, knows that there is no country in which such a ceaseless activity prevails in the very highest departments of science and literature, as in Germany. The movements which have taken place there since the beginning of the present century, especially in theology and philosophy, and which are at this moment directed more and more to practical subjects, call into exercise an intellectual force and energy, very similar to those which convulsed Christianity in the age immediately preceding the Reformation. This enormous scientific activity must finally have a practical result; it cannot be possible that it is mere empty, useless trifling. If otherwise, we must despair altogether of the power of the spirit, and of the presence of a God in history.

There are cases in which one and the same nation has played two successive parts in the great drama of the world's history, or has become world-historical a second time, always, of course, under a different character. Rome, for example, in her first act, governed the world with the sword, and laid almost all the civilized nations of antiquity prostrate at her feet. But her sword was broken by the gospel of peace, the Roman eagle was cast into the dust by the northern irruption, as by a tempest, and she stepped forward a second time to govern with the cross all western Christendom, until the time of the Reformation.

But we need not appeal to such an analogy. It lies in the very nature of Protestantism that it cannot be completed in one act. It is a perfectly authorized protest of religious freedom, founded and based upon the word of God, against an outward despotic ecclesiasticism, of private judgment against the shackles of tradition; of the principle of individuality against the stiff authority of public opinion. It is clear, however, that Protestantism is just as liable to degenerate into the opposite extreme of spiritual libertinism and licentiousness of opinion, as Catholicism to run out into Popery. Just as clear is it that there is truth in the ideas of authority, of law, of tradition, and the unity of the church, and that these are necessary to Protestantism, as complementary elements to give it a churchly character and secure its spiritual life against incurable disease. The country, then, which performed the first part of the work, has

now taken upon herself the obligation of accomplishing also, so far as it is able, the second part for the good of Christendom, with the coöperation, of course, of all other protestant countries, that thus the work may be carried out to its proper end. In the sixteenth century Germany commenced the great *schism* in the church, and it is now therefore, in the nineteenth century, her most weighty task to lay the foundation of the still nobler work of *union*, and to do this, as in the other case, by the power of philosophical and theological thought, by the might of ideas. To accomplish this, she needs, of course, the coöperation of those nations which are furnished with a practical talent, the gift of organizing, viz., the English and Americans. We have thus given the highest position from which the importance of German literature for this country can be viewed—its relations to the church. This may be a new idea to most of our readers. It is, however, by no means, a mere fancy, but a conclusion derived from a calm examination of various appearances and signs in the highest sphere of our present American literature. Before we enter more particularly on this subject, we shall give an outline of the course of Protestant theology in Germany since the Reformation.

The productive period of Protestantism was followed, in the seventeenth century, by the period of reflection. It then took upon itself the duty of comprehending the heritage left it by its fathers, of defending it against the attacks of enemies, and establishing it upon a solid basis. This movement is represented by the celebrated dogmatic and polemic works of Chemnitz, John Gerhardt, Hutter, Quenstedt, Calov, and others, all of them written in Latin. These works can still be considered, in a certain sense, as the depositaries of dogmatic learning, and of the Protestant polemics against Romanism. In these efforts, however, the church fell into a new scholasticism, which reduced the living vigor of the theology of the Reformation into abstract formulas appealing only to the understanding, and gradually lost sight of the practical wants of the heart in meeting the demands of theoretical orthodoxy. This lifeless orthodoxy necessarily produced an antagonistic element in the consciousness of Protestantism. The reaction first arose in the pietism of Spener and Franke, which had for its object to satisfy the claims of the heart, of practical religious experience. Soon, however, the sceptical understanding shared largely in the same general movement, in the form of Rationalism, which looked upon the Protestant orthodoxy as a new papacy, and a betrayal of the Reformation. The eighteenth cen-

tury may be properly called the revolutionary or destructive period, preparing the way for a new structure, however, by clearing away the old rubbish. It had a fiery hatred against tyranny of every kind, and was striving for freedom; not, however, for the blessed freedom of the children of God, but for that of the flesh. It desired an earth without a heaven, a State without a church, a religion without a revelation, a Christianity without a Christ, a humanity without a God. In these times, rationalism, under different forms, pervaded the whole church, and, as is well known, it is not yet altogether eradicated. It showed itself in England and Scotland in the form of Deism, Latitudinarianism and *Indifferentism*; in France, as downright Materialism and Atheism; in North America it revealed itself in the defection to Arminianism, and in the general deadness of the churches: Wherever it could not develop itself scientifically, there it existed at least practically, often even under the cloak of orthodoxy. In Germany, however, it entered most deeply into the spheres of theology and philosophy, and produced an extensive literature full of learning and acuteness. The German mind, having a strong inclination toward theory, and a truly unwearied industry in scientific researches, when a sceptical spirit was once awakened, could not be satisfied with a mere denial of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity and popular representations of its truths, but took great care to prove its assertions, and fortify its position with a bulwark of learning. It formally attacked the Bible, investigated its origin, the authenticity and integrity of its separate books, and all the historical circumstances to which it owes its origin, in order to arrive at the conclusion that it is a mere human production, although of the highest kind. With an unwearied spirit of inquiry, it passed through the different periods, even the most retired nooks of church history, to prove that the received orthodoxy was the offspring of the worst passions, of party interests and the despotism of church and State; that it was therefore merely a product of man, which, besides, had changed its color in different times, and had therefore no right to exercise authority over a thinking mind.

However low the judgment we may form of Rationalism, we cannot deny that this important movement was, in some sense, natural and necessary. Just as little can we maintain that it stands in a merely accidental connection with Protestantism. Protestantism shook off the fetters of a blind authority, aroused the spirit of free inquiry, and insisted upon understanding how the truths of revelation could be harmonized with the dictates of

human nature. This end could not be reached at once. Inquiry is a continuous process, which, according to the laws that govern the development of life in the individual, and in all history, passes through all kinds of obstructions, deviations, and diseases, but in the end always advances. Rationalism is an example of this process, being a diseased, yet historically necessary crisis. It believes truth only, when it has found it rational, and made it agree with its own thinking. In this it is, indeed, altogether one-sided, the religious interest is subordinate, and that which it calls reason is generally nothing more than the dry, superficial, abstract, everyday understanding, which cannot be an arbiter in the highest spheres of the spirit, and of which holds true what Paul says (1 Cor. 2: 14) of the *ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος*. Nevertheless, it revealed many weak points in the old system, cleared away many prejudices, rendered criticism more acute, and opened the way for new developments in theology. This rationalism having been inwardly surmounted, the theology which has sprung up in its place has, in consequence, a higher scientific character, and better satisfies the demands of reason, than the former orthodoxy. And it was in the same country, where rationalism was carried out to its furthest consequences, and assumed its most dangerous form, that it was confronted with its most powerful opponents, and most effectually assailed.

Since the close of the last century, German literature, in all its departments, has experienced a glorious resurrection, and been clothed in a truly classical form. Every one is acquainted with the masters of German poetry, Göthe, Schiller, Tieck, Novalis, the Schlegels, Uhland, Rückert, and others. Germany has done more for classical philology in the last fifty years, than all other civilized nations together. No important philological work can appear at the present time, without having availed itself, directly or indirectly, of the researches of a Wolf, Hermann, Creuzer, Ottfried Müller, Lobeck, Passow, Böckh, Bekker, etc. The grammars and dictionaries, which are in most general use in this country and in England, are translations of Zumpt, Matthiae, Buttman, Rost, Kühner, Schneider, Passow. This is not at all contested. Every one, able to form a judgment in the case, will at once admit the extensive learning of German writers, the depth and penetration with which they enter most profoundly into the spirit of Grecian and Roman antiquity, and every philologist, who knows his own interest, will endeavor to make himself acquainted with these vast treasures. In the sphere of historical research,



the names of John von Müller, Niebuhr, Leo, Ranke, stand conspicuous; and translations of several of these works, e. g. Ranke's History of the Popes, and of the German Reformation, show, that the attention of England and America has been directed to these researches.

The later German philosophy has comparatively found least acceptance with the Anglo-American mind, although, in this very sphere, the German genius has accomplished gigantic labors since the close of the last century. Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, authors severally of new systems, connected however inseparably, as links of one chain, and whose successive systems grew with dialectic necessity each out of the preceding, need not fear comparison with the greatest philosophers of Greece. Various combined circumstances explain the disfavor with which German philosophy is looked upon among us at the present time. The English mind is rather averse to abstruse, metaphysical speculations. The philosophy of Locke also, which was already scientifically overcome in Kant's Critic of Pure Reason, has obtained such general sway in England and America, that it is hard to renounce its authority. Lastly, pernicious consequences for theology are feared from the above mentioned philosophy. To support this, appeal might be made to the so-called left side of the Hegelian school, with Strauss at its head, who has reduced the gospel history to a wreath of myths, woven unconsciously by the Christian church in a state of poetic fervor, whilst filled with Messianic ideas. It should not be forgotten, however, that every philosophical system can be applied to theology in a twofold manner, can be used as an apology for Christianity, or misused as a weapon against it. The Platonic philosophy was, for many of the greatest church fathers, as Justin Martyr, Clemens of Alexandria, Origen, and even Augustine, a bridge to lead them to faith in Christ; whilst the later Platonists, as Plotinus, Porphyry, and Jamblichus, endeavored with its aid to restore heathenism, or, directly or indirectly, to assault Christianity. The eulogists of Locke's philosophy, who condemn German speculation as being infidel, should remember that Hume obtained his scepticism, Gibbon his bitter enmity against Christianity, and Tindal, Collins, and Bolingbroke their deism, from this same fountain. Such also is the case with Hegel. Strauss and Bruno Bauer are not his only disciples. Men like Marheinecke, Daub, Billroth, Erdmann, and still more Göschel, have obtained from his system the strongest scientific weapons against Rationalism, and endeavored with Hegelian dialectics to establish on

new grounds, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Divinity of Christ, etc. But distinguished American theologians refer us, in support of their opposition, to the later German speculations, to theologians of considerable merit in Germany, who condemn it in the same unmerciful terms. Here, however, there is generally a misunderstanding at bottom, since in speaking of German philosophy reference is falsely had to a particular system. But as we can speak in general of an English philosophy, without having reference to the system of Bacon or Locke ; just as well, and with far greater right, can we speak of a German philosophy, i. e. a general philosophical mode of thinking, which serves as a common basis to all the better schools, notwithstanding all the differences among them. When therefore, the celebrated church historian, Neander, shows a decided opposition to the system of Hegel, we must not conclude thence that he is an enemy to German philosophy in general ; much less, that he would be willing to exchange it with the system of Locke ; his intimate relations with Schelling, concerning whose positive system he entertains the most sanguine hopes, prove the contrary.

Notwithstanding all these obstructions, we see that German speculation has made its way, in more recent times, into England and America. Men such as Coleridge, Carlyle, Marsh, have evidently received their mental stamp under its influence, and their ideas are spreading further every day in the large circle of their readers. Dr. Rauch's *Psychology*, although it has not, thus far, attracted the attention which it deserves, will yet come into favor ; and it will be found that it is the best work on the subject in the English language, and an ornament to American literature. We have no desire at all that any German system of philosophy should obtain a general ascendancy among us. This is, besides, altogether impossible. Our view, on the contrary, is this, that our American philosophy should be modified and carried forward to a more advanced position, by the direct or indirect influence of the better philosophical literature of Germany. Why should not "the science of sciences" be capable of development just as well as other departments of learning ? Whilst, during the last fifty years, the natural sciences have advanced with giant strides, our philosophy has continued essentially upon the position of the seventeenth century. Far otherwise is it in Germany, where the advances of other sciences, and especially of theology, go hand in hand with the advances of philosophy. For some parts of theology, especially of dogmatics and morals, philosophy is indis-

pensable. But from the position of Locke we cannot treat doctrines, e. g. those of the Trinity, incarnation, freedom of will, immortality, in a way that will satisfy the demands of the present times. This is felt to be the case by many of our most gifted young men, who in other respects have no sympathy with German literature.

In theology, lastly, in all its branches, especially in Exegesis, Church History, Dogmatics, Symbolics, and Ethics, Germany has shown an extraordinary productiveness, since the late great revival of religion in that country. It would lead us much too far to characterize here the different schools, and to mention their most important representatives. This would be an interesting subject for a separate and thorough Article for the "Bibliotheca Sacra," which we very willingly leave to a more experienced pen. We only wish here to call attention to one point, which is of the greatest practical importance, although very little or not at all considered. The extensive exegetical and historical learning of the German theologians is coming to be admitted on all sides, and an acquaintance with their works in *this* respect, is looked upon as very useful and important. The names of Neander, Olshausen, Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Nitzsch, Twisten, Jul. Müller, Dorner, Ullmann, Lücke, Harless, Bleek, and others, have become favorites amongst us. Many of our most respectable theologians, however, who set a high value upon German learning, and know how to make good use of it in their own works, still show a strong opposition to the dogmatical and philosophical *ideas* of German theology. At one time they fear rationalism, then transcendentalism or mysticism, or something, at any rate, which is contrary to their own system and dangerous to the tendency of their denomination. This is very natural, and we blame no one for it. There is, we admit, in the writings of these men a certain freedom and unbiassed judgment, which cannot be easily understood. It requires a long acquaintance to surmount successfully these stumbling-blocks. The German spirit has passed through a terrible battle with scepticism, and has come out victorious. The best advice we can give here is, to cast oneself boldly into the whirlpool, and swim through it; not merely to sip at the cup of doubts, but to drain it to the dregs. He who makes but a superficial acquaintance with German theology and philosophy, runs great risk of doing injury to his simple, child-like faith; but he who contends with it manfully, and passes through the whole intricate and tedious process of investigating the deepest grounds of

our most holy faith, will come out more firmly grounded in orthodoxy than before. We cannot expect that our own theology will long be spared such struggles. Have they not even already commenced, and that through the influence of the negative and sceptical part of German literature? Is not even the pantheism of the left side of the Hegelian school transplanted into the midst of us? Unitarianism and Universalism put on the armor of foreign learning and speculation; and if we do not greatly mistake the signs of the times, we will venture to predict that a terrible struggle in the sphere of science awaits us. But to fight this battle successfully, we need the most effectual weapons. We must assail the enemy in his own camp, and discomfit him with his own weapons. If we only evade his attacks, or meet him in our old worn out armor, he will justly mock us. After gunpowder had been invented, victory could be obtained no longer with bow and arrow. Every period has its own way of doing battle, and its own armor. This is true of theology also; although errors and the enemy remain the same in the lowest depths of the heart, they nevertheless change their colors, armor, and mode of attack. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that the watchmen of Zion should watch closely all their movements and stratagems, follow them up to their secret lurking places, and never rest, until the cause of truth has been justified on all sides, and all opposition to the church been converted into a blessing.

We would also remind those, who look with distrust upon German dogmatics, that a merely outward learning, one which is not quickened by a distinctive spirit, and pervaded by a living principle, can help us but very little; and that, just by means of his ideas, the German is called upon to do, and has already done the greatest service both to the church and the world. His learning is to a great extent only the fruit of these ideas, and interwoven with them in the most intimate manner. His great researches, for example, in the sphere of church and dogmatic history, are inseparably connected with the whole modern view of the church and her development. The *spirit* which breathes through the immortal work of Neander, is of far more account for theology, than even the most learned investigations. But good fruits always point us to a good tree. Luther and Melancthon no doubt did important services to the Reformation by their learning; yet that great movement was by no means a product of the learning, but of the deep practical religious ideas, which filled the minds of

these men, and impelled them to new investigations and researches.

In the present evangelical theology of Germany there is reigning a genius, which refers us prophetically to a higher future of the church. Through the unwearied diligence of learned men, the entire field of the history of the kingdom of God in all countries and times, has been laid open. Narrow prejudices and party interests which formerly separated Protestants from Catholics, Lutherans from the Reformed, modern times from the middle ages, and excited them to a fanatical hatred against each other, have been made to vanish through the power of a liberal and unprejudiced science, a science whose sole object is truth. A cordial sympathy is felt for all forms of Christian life, and the footsteps of the Lord, who promised to be with his own always, unto the end of the world, are recognized with reverence even in the darkest ages. These grand views of the church of Christ and her development cannot possibly allow us to be satisfied with the present distracted condition of Protestantism, especially as it has worked itself out practically amongst us, but must point us far beyond this to a time, when one united and truly evangelical catholic church, enriched by the treasures of all past centuries, and adorned with the virtues of all true children of God of every creed or denomination, shall arise from the wreck of sectarianism, and go forth in transcendent beauty to meet her heavenly Bridegroom. In this very thing lies the great *practical* significance of the better German theology for the religious condition of our country. Even we are becoming every day more and more conscious of the truth, that our sectarianism is an *abnormal* condition of the church, that it stands in direct opposition to the sacerdotal prayer of our Lord, and the idea of the church, which includes essentially the character of unity and catholicity, and that it hinders the most important interests of piety. We openly confess that we have no confidence in the so-called Evangelical Alliance of the last year; we look upon it, however, as an important sign of our times inasmuch as a large and respectable portion of Protestant Christianity has, by its mere appearance there, declared in fact that they are dissatisfied with sectarianism and are longing for the unity of the church. We have now arrived at a crisis which, although it is grounded in the development of Protestantism itself, refers us with the same historical necessity to a point beyond it; and this crisis must be surmounted in the very land where it has reached its culmination, namely, in America. One

of the first and most indispensable means of removing this crying evil, is without doubt a reformation of theology. This must cast off the sectarian character with which it is at present clothed among us; lay aside its selfishness, and its insignificant party contentions, and become in spirit and truth free, united and catholic in the best sense of the word, and train up in the same spirit the future servants and leaders of the congregations, and through them the congregations themselves.

Of course, this work cannot be accomplished by theology alone, whether it be German, or any other. This theology must be changed into flesh and blood, into life and activity. For this work the American nationality, which possesses an uncommon practical talent, is peculiarly fitted. We do not hesitate therefore to assert, that the better element of the German theology transplanted to the soil of the New World, the world of the future, will yet bear much richer fruit, than even in the land of its birth, or in England. America is besides under particular obligation to transplant the spirit of the evangelical German theology, and to appropriate to herself in a living and organic way all the riches of her learning. For America is, in the first place, a free port to the entire old world. It exists not merely for English, Scotch and Irish; but every one, who believes in freedom and in the future, finds here a hospitable reception, and the most unlimited field to unfold his powers. This large and wise liberality is the most beautiful ornament of our constitution, and one of which it must never be robbed. For this reason we cannot suppose that our nation is to be a mere copy of England, but that, by a full appropriation of everything good and true in all European nations, it is to arise more and more to originality and independence of mind, and turn a new leaf in the history of mankind. A second ground of this obligation is the fact, that there exist among us already two organized German churches, Lutheran and Reformed, with German education and German customs, which form a very important part of our population especially in the Middle and Western States. Through increasing immigration these are daily growing in importance and influence. Their institutions of learning are becoming more and more conscious of their peculiar calling, and although they desire to be truly American with all their heart, yet they are unwilling for this very reason to be purely English or Scotch, but Anglo-German. Although their influence upon the literature of the country has been thus far very limited, we cannot from this draw an unfavorable conclusion for the future. The case will be

substantially changed, when once the masses are spiritually quickened, and thoroughly educated ministers occupy every station. Can we suppose that God has transplanted three millions of Germans to this continent, so pregnant with future events, only to be swallowed up in a foreign nationality without leaving a trace of their former existence behind them? Shall we not rather suppose that they are intended to act as a leaven upon it, to impart to it elements, which shall increase its powers, and lead it on to new paths of development?

Thus we have given briefly our views concerning the importance of German literature, especially of theology, for America. That we are not indulging in dreams and idle fancies, is proven by the fact, that since the last twenty years a steadily growing interest has come to be taken in it especially in New England, and that an acquaintance with it is looked upon more and more as a necessary element of all higher education, even of ladies. In the leading literary journals we always find notices of translations of German works, or compilations from them, and our best authors show in their own works an immediate or mediate acquaintance with corresponding works of the German. In theology and philology the school of Andover deserves the highest praise. Paying no heed to the doubts and exceptions of ignorance and prejudice, it has opened the way to those rich fountains, and drawn from them with a noble and honorable love for learning. Her present eviable position and her extensive influence give a triumphant proof of the wholesome fruits which have been produced by her efforts. But the movement once commenced, must necessarily be carried forward. To check the progress of German literature in this country is just as impossible as to banish railways, or steamboats, or the magnetic telegraph from the world. The Puritans do not belong to that class of persons who leave a work but half done. "Go ahead" is their watchword in all their undertakings. Whatever is done in New England gives measure and law to the whole United States. It is the cradle of our religious and political freedom, of our social habits and customs. It will also justly retain this tone-giving position, as long as it maintains its superiority in intelligence, in scientific culture and practical ingenuity; and that this is still the case, the writer of this imperfect sketch is free to admit, notwithstanding all his German Pennsylvania patriotism.

The book, whose title we have put at the head of our Article, is also an evidence of the growing interest of New England in Ger-

man literature. We welcome it as a valuable contribution to a thorough knowledge of the German language and of the theology of the Reformation. It appears in very excellent style, and is highly creditable to the publishers. The printing is correct with exception of some unimportant errors such as almost unavoidably creep into every work.<sup>1</sup> These "Select Treatises of Martin Luther" are important in a double point of view. First and chiefly they have a *philological* value as a help in the learning of the German to those who have already proceeded beyond the elements. In this respect the book is admirably adapted to the higher classes in our colleges. The copious notes of the editor are abundant evidence of his thorough acquaintance not only with the forms but also with the spirit of the language, and are the more valuable since the larger part of such helps do not go beyond the mere surface. It was a happy thought of Dr. Sears to select Luther's writings, above all others, for this purpose; for he was not only a reformer of the faith, but also of the language of his nation. His translation of the Bible, especially, is a classic master-piece, and marked out the path for the later German national literature. The greatest poets, as Göthe, Schiller and Herder, formed their style upon this unsurpassed model. As Luther is the most true, original and vigorous representative of the German national character, both in its lights and shades, so too, he handles his mother tongue with an admirable and truly genial mastery. "Luther's language," says the renowned philologist Grimm, who is here the most competent judge, "on account of its noble and almost wonderful purity, and also of its mighty influence, must be considered as the kernel and basis of the new High German, from which even down to our times there have been only unimportant deviations, and these mostly to its injury in force and expression. The new High German may, in fact, be designated as the Protestant dialect; and its free and liberal spirit has long since obtained the mastery over the poets and writers of the Catholic faith, unconsciously to themselves. Our language, indeed, according to the irresistible course of all things, has sunk down into certain fixed grammatical forms, and relations of sounds; but for that which nourishes and regenerates these forms and sounds, for that which has caused it

<sup>1</sup> E. g. p. 17, *Adluss* for *Abluss*; p. 18, *seyr* for *sehr*; p. 19, *löcherichen* for *löcherichter*, *Opinien* for *Opinionen*; p. 98, *Kurper* for *Körper*; p. 105, *Deutschlunn* for *Deutschland*; p. 213, Note, *den Aeltern* for *die*, and *die Kinder* for *der*. We often meet with *ck* instead of *k*, e. g. in *Gedanken*, *strecken* (p. 290), and *tz* instead of simple *z*, as in *Hertz*, *Schmertz*, etc.



to put forth the blossoms of a new poetry, we are indebted to no one more than to Luther." Whoever, then, would obtain a thorough mastery of the modern German language, whoever wishes to understand it genetically, must go back to this fountain, which gushes forth so fresh and clear, and he will assuredly be struck with ever increasing wonder at its singular force, flexibility, fullness, depth and manifoldness.

These "Select Treatises" are also important in an *historical* and *theological* point of view. They lead us into the laboratory of that stupendous religious movement, which shook the whole of Europe, and founded a new world in the Western hemisphere. For the United States, through the medium of English Protestantism, are, in their thinking and acting, rooted in the German Reformation. But it is impossible to obtain a complete knowledge of the great Reformer without access to his works in the original. They are so peculiarly German, that even the best translation must be defective. Here, now, is an opportunity offered to become acquainted with several of his most important productions, which once kindled the fire of enthusiasm in thousands and millions of hearts. The selection appears to us to be on the whole a happy one. The most important and interesting piece is manifestly the famous "*Schrift an den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation; von des christlichen Standes Besserung.*" Luther wrote this at the end of June, 1520, and in it, for the first time in a formal way, regardless of consequences, declared war against the whole Romish system. Before this, he had chiefly attacked only some single crying abuses. This is a genuine national work, written with the fiery zeal of an Elias, and with the noble indignation of a German heart. It worked like a fire-brand in the German nation. Before two months had passed, four thousand copies were sold. It has a certain affinity with the patriotic efforts of the German knights, Ulrich von Hutten, Franz von Sickingen, and Sylvester von Schaumburg. Luther saw in them his helpers, but at the same time he discerned very marked defects in their procedure. In their opposition to the Italians, they proceeded from a one-sided patriotic and political point of view, and made use of carnal weapons; by bitter sarcasm, biting irony, and the warlike sword, they would overthrow a system which could be successfully conquered only by the spiritual might of the positive truth of the pure gospel. Thus Luther, in the year 1521, wrote to Spalatin regarding Hutten: "I would not that they should fight for the gospel with violence and bloodshed, and thus have I answered him. By the *word*

is the world overcome, by the word is the church preserved, also by the word will it again come to its rights; and Antichrist, as he got what is his without violence, will without violence fall." The most important thought which Luther declares in his appeal to the German nobility is that of the universal priesthood of Christians, in opposition to an exclusive hierarchical order in the Catholic church. The distinction between clergy and laity is merely a distinction of office, and necessary for the sake of order. But every one, says Luther, who has been baptized, and who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, is essentially a priest and king. Who does not at once see the extremely important consequences which the realization of this genuine Protestant idea must bring with it into the religious and even the political life of the world? For we may say that the democratic ideas of modern times are only a transference of the doctrine of the universal priesthood from the domain of the church to that of the State. It might indeed now also be the case, that the laity of the higher ranks, who, with so great trust, encouraged and called upon Luther to shake off the Romish yoke, would assume to themselves too many rights over the church. This was in fact the case in the period of the Reformation, with the kings and princes in Germany and England; and it cannot be denied, that the Reformers were not always circumspect enough in guarding against the evil of a sort of papacy of royalty (*Caesareopapismus*), which has done so much injury to the Protestant church of the old world.

Our limits forbid us giving an account of the other pieces contained in this volume, which are partly of an exegetical and practical religious character, and partly relate to education. We only wish to be allowed to make one proposal before we take leave of this book. Luther's activity as a Reformer may be divided into two periods, which are very different from each other, but which, instead of excluding are complements of one another. The dividing line between the two was the year 1521. In the first period he contended from the Protestant position against Popish errors. It was a contest of freedom against spiritual tyranny, of living faith against dead works of the law, of the deepest convictions of the soul against an outward ceremonial service, of the feeling of individuality and nationality, which had attained its majesty, against the arrogant usurpations of a foreign power beyond the Alps. This contest against Rome began with the ninety-five theses, and reached its highest point at the Diet of Worms, where Luther bore fearless testimony to his deepest convictions,

in the presence of the mightiest representatives of the empire and the church. From that period, he did not bring forward anything essentially new against the Roman Catholic church. The principal battles on his side had been fought, and he had dismantled, for all times, the chief fortresses of the Papacy.

But there still remained for the Reformer another, and equally important work, although in many respects more difficult and unpleasant. He had to cut off the excrescences of his opposition to the Papacy, to curb the excesses of the movement which he had himself begun, and thus to save it from a complete degeneracy into a lawless radicalism. This false tendency manifested itself first in Wittenberg, and partly among the friends who sympathized most deeply with Luther's views, during his retirement in his Patmos at Eisenach, and like a shadow accompanied the progress of the Reformation through all Germany, Switzerland, France, Holland, and England. Luther did not wish to destroy the church, but merely to purify it; nor to annul the sacraments, nor bring them down to insignificant ceremonies, but merely to cleanse them from superstitions and additions; not to render the unity of the church, and open door and gate to sectarianism, but only to break the bonds of tyranny over the conscience, and dissipate the false semblance of an external conformity; not to make Christians free in untamed recklessness and arbitrary notions, but with rational liberty conformed to law. Therefore, instructed by the occurrences at Wittenberg, he contended from a sound, catholic point of view, against the ultra Protestants and pseudo-Protestants of his time; he defended ecclesiastical discipline and order against wild and factious enthusiasts, the obligations of the law against Antinomianism, the lawfulness of Paedo-baptism against the Anabaptists, the mystic significancy of the eucharist against an abstract intellectual, rationalizing tendency; in short, the idea of the church of history and of authority, against an exaggerated religious and intellectual subjective tendency, perilous to Christianity itself. This is the catholic, the *churchly*, the positive, the constructive aspect of Luther's efficiency. It was this, too, which saved Protestantism in the narrower sense, the product of his earlier efforts, from destruction. It is of the highest importance that we understand both these elements in Luther's character, and recognize their mutual relations. Unhappily it is only the anti-Roman Luther who is usually appreciated among us; but the anti-pseudo-Protestant, the anti-sectarian, the anti-rationalistic, the evangelical catholic, and *churchly* Luther, is wholly ignored and misunder-

stood. But for our times and our land, it is the latter which is of the greatest importance. Our chief enemy at present is not the Papacy of Rome, but a false Protestantism, a sectarian spirit, and those rationalizing tendencies in the very midst of us, which impair our powers, promote the growth of Catholicism, and threaten at last the total abolition of the true character of the church. If we prevail over these enemies, Rome has no power over us, and no future in this land of freedom. So long as we are subservient to the sectarian spirit, and, in our attacks against Rome, take the anti-ecclesiastical and anti-historical position of ultra and false Protestantism, all our shafts will fall back upon ourselves, and a few years will teach us to be careful and to tremble for our own existence. For our part, we have too much trust in history, or rather in the unseen and all-wise Ruler of history, not to hope with all assurance that our Protestant theology and church will soon come to a consciousness of the dangers that threaten us, will enter into the right way, and at last issue forth victorious from its struggle against its foes.

Dr. Sears might make a valuable contribution to this purpose, if, in a second volume, he should bring before our theological youth who are learning German, some of Luther's writings in his contest against ultra Protestantism, and for the church and its institutions, and thus complete the portrait of this greatest of the Germans. As poet, as husband, as father, as friend, and as correspondent, Luther deserves to be known amongst us; and De Wette's collection of his letters presents for this object the richest materials. This might easily be combined with the plan we have proposed; and in taking leave of the honored author, we wish him the needful leisure and inclination for its accomplishment.