

THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER.



LUTHER BURNS THE PAPAL BULL.

THE
Life of Martin Luther :

THE
HERO OF THE REFORMATION.

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SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
W. SWAN SONNENSCHN & CO.,
PATERNOSTER ROW,
1884.

Butler & Tanner,
The Selwood Printing Works,
Frome, and London.



MARTIN LUTHER.



CHAPTER I.

MANY disputes have occurred among the Roman Catholic writers as to the exact date of Luther's birth, and in order to support their astrological prophecies they falsified the day and hour of his advent. They believed, or pretended to believe, that no man could have effected such a revolution in the church unless he had been under the influence of the devil. They asserted that he was born October 22nd, 1483, at a particular hour and even minute, while still another Romish writer declared that it occurred October 22nd, 1484, differing a whole year from others although he made his astrological results coincide exactly with theirs.

It is a pitiful fact that at this period men of culture were so thoroughly imbued with the prevailing notions regarding the power of the devil and his ministers to fashion everything according to their own will and pleasure, even in opposition to the Almighty, and not less pitiful than amazing to read the calculations of those star-readers regarding Luther's birth and mission.

"This is strange," they said, "and indeed terrible! Five planets, Jupiter, Venus, Mars, Saturn and Mercury, to which may be added the Sun and Moon, being in conjunction under Scorpio in the 9th station of the heavens, which the Arabians allotted to religion, made Luther a sacrilegious heretic, a most bitter and profane enemy to the Christian faith. From the horoscope being directed to the conjunction of Mars he died without any sense of religion. His soul, most impious, sailed to hell, there to be scourged for ever with the fiery whips of Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megæra."

It is plain that in this instance the wish was father to the thought; had the power of the papists been equal to their desires, there is no doubt that the above would be quite true.

But the best authority for the time of his birth was his own family. Philip Melancthon says that he often asked Margaret at what hour of what day it was that her son came into the world. She stated that it was on the 10th of November, at eleven o'clock in the evening, at Eisleben, whither she had gone to buy provisions at the fair that was held every year in that place ; and the child was baptized the next day after the name of the saint, St. Martin, whose festival they were celebrating at the time. Luther's brother James, an honest worthy man, said that the year was 1483.

It was a wicked and superstitious age in which Luther was born, but it was a providential thing that his parents were thoroughly honest and religious, and to this circumstance may be in part attributed the strong sense of right which always actuated his conduct. They could not but witness the excesses of the people around them, but the sturdy John Luther kept himself and his family free from the contaminating vices, and in spite of his poverty he determined that his children should possess the light of knowledge.

Martin himself, as a child, was uncommonly

quick and intelligent, and at the age of six could read and write with ease. But the severities of his life would appear barbarous to the English youth : he tells us that for the most trifling offence he was unmercifully beaten, and on one occasion for stealing a hazel nut his mother thrashed him until the blood ran, for she regarded the insignificance of the article stolen as offering no excuse. But Martin's respect for his parents was deep and sincere ; he full well knew that they were hard put to it to provide the necessaries of life for their family, and he daily witnessed the patient endurance which they exhibited in the trials of life ; the picture of his mother returning from the forest, where she had been working all day bending under the heavy load of wood, and in the deep snow, made an indelible impression upon his mind, and in after life he always spoke of his parents with love and veneration.

The sternness of his home life was only equalled by the harsh treatment which he endured at school, sometimes being beaten fifteen times during the course of the day ; and lest this should be taken as an instance of stupidity or obstinacy, it may be stated that he

made such rapid progress that his father, being encouraged by the favourable reports, sent him at the age of thirteen to the school of the Franciscans at Magdeburg, whither he journeyed in May, 1497, in company with a fellow pupil, John Reinecke.

Here however he found no abatement of the stern usage to which he had before been subjected, for, though he was no longer beaten, he had to undergo bodily hardships which were scarcely less severe, for on account of the poverty of his parents he had to pay for his own board and education from the small trifles he collected of the richer people by singing in the streets. This was a most precarious means of existence and meant many hungry hours.

At the end of a year, in 1498, Luther went to Eisenach to study in the schools there, and fortunately better times were awaiting him. Being out one day begging his bread, as was his wont, he met with a sympathetic friend in the person of Dame Ursula Cotta, who, being attracted by the bright intelligence of the boy, and his clear beautiful voice, made room for him in her own humble home.

Martin's father had by frugality and intelli-

gence raised himself from the position of a common miner to a higher grade, but he was not yet able to bear the burden of his son's education, who consequently had to labour hard every hour of the day, but his passion for learning was so strong that it enabled him to surmount these difficulties, and affords a good example of what may be accomplished by indomitable energy and perseverance.

In the family of the Cottas Luther's life was much different from that which he had previously passed through; the help of these generous people, rendered with such unvaried kindness, enabled him to give his undivided attention to his studies. And this help too came at the very moment when he began to feel that he knew not what would become of him, and when positive starvation stared him in the face.

He was now no longer subject to want or weighed down with care, his mind became calmer and his disposition more cheerful. His observance of religious duties and his exertions for self improvement were now unceasing, and he lost no time in preparing himself for entering one of the universities of his country.

For the space of four years he remained here, and the family of the Cottas grew to love him as one of their own. His joyous nature called forth responsive pleasures from the hearts of his friends, more particularly of the children, with whom he would spare time to tell stories of his early life when living in the Mansfeld valley, near to the Hartz mountains. He would speak to his eager little listeners of the great black pine forests, so sombre and so still, and of the furnaces in which they fuse the copper and smelt the precious silver, and of the deep pits under the hills, out of which from time to time came troops of grim-looking miners who, spite of their heavy and gloomy work, would sing fine bold songs and choruses which Martin repeated.

And again his little audience would crowd closer and closer to him as he related wild legends of the demon hunters and gnomes; of their tempestuous course over hill and dale, and through forest glade; and of the wonderful appearance of strange beings who lived deep down in the bowels of the earth.

In fancy Martin would then take them to Magdeburg, and tell them of the glories of the

place, and of a picture which he had many times looked reverently upon ; it represented a ship painted to signify the church, and therein was no layman, not even a king or prince : none but the pope, and his cardinals and bishops in the prow, with the Holy Ghost hovering over them, the priests and monks with their oars at the side ; and thus they were sailing on to heaven. The laymen were swimming along in the water around the ship ; some of them were drowning, and some were drawing themselves along by means of the ropes which the monks occasionally cast out to them to enable them to cleave to the vessel and go on with the others to heaven. There was no pope, nor cardinal, nor bishop, nor priest, nor monk in the water, only laymen.

And when his new found friends would pity him that his life had been so hard, that he had been compelled to beg the bread which his father had been too poor to give him, he would tell them that it was not for a poor miner's son to complain, when he had seen a prince of Anhalt, as a monk, going about the streets in a cowl begging bread, with a sack on his shoulders, like a beast of burden, so heavy

was it that he was bowed to the ground. The poor prince had fasted, and watched, and mortified his flesh, until he looked like an image of death; and shortly afterwards he died.

The time passed quickly and pleasantly for Martin now; he laboured hard to gain the knowledge so necessary to fill a high position in the sphere which his father had resolved that he should occupy.

He studied grammar, rhetoric, and the classics under a famous master, Trebonius, the rector of the barefooted Carmelites; he was very different from the tutors of his younger life. It was his custom to take off his hat and bow when he entered the school, and to give his lessons with head uncovered, to honour as he said the consuls, chancellors, doctors and masters that would one day proceed from his school.

Martin's steady application to his work soon won this learned man's esteem, and he was considered one of his special favourites. In his studies he was at the head of the school; he especially excelled in reciting and writing prose or verse, or church music. The love of this

latter was strongly exhibited all through his life, and he used to say: "Music is one of the strongest safeguards against the powers of the devil, who is a saturnine spirit and hates music, because it assists in overcoming temptation; therefore he is its inveterate enemy, and as for those who despise music, I despise them; next to theology, I give music the first place and highest honour." And indeed we are much indebted to Luther for giving an impetus to congregational singing.

After four years spent at Eisenach he prepared to enter the university of Erfurt; they were four years of unremitting kindness from the Cotta family, which made so deep an impression upon him that he never forgot them, but in after years tried and succeeded in repaying them. He had his kind hostess in view when he wrote, "there is nothing sweeter on this earth than the heart of a woman in which piety has fixed its abode." The good dame had entertained an angel unawares, and her name will be remembered in connection with his through all ages.

The time had now come when his boyhood had for ever to be left behind, and the larger duties of the life of the man fulfilled. His

steady labours had produced the fruits which steady labour always will, and now, to his father's joy, he was pronounced ripe for the university where he was to prosecute his legal studies. Erfurt then was the chief centre of learning in Germany ; it held within its walls more than a thousand students, and its professors were men of world-wide fame.

We shall follow with interest in the next chapter the career of the earnest student, Martin Luther.





CHAPTER II.

BY unceasing application Martin soon won the sincere goodwill of his companions and the esteem of his tutors. His father had reached a position from which he could assist his son, and the hard struggles that marked his early life now disappeared, and he could pursue his work with no harassing thoughts for his daily bread.

By his father's especial desire he gave his attention to Roman literature and law, and assiduously endeavoured to master the intricate windings and turnings involved in these studies.

He was to adopt the legal profession, because his father knew that was the road to the most lucrative position in the empire, and to the end that his son might succeed he strained all his powers to assist him.

But Martin soon found out that he had not that love for the pursuit which is so necessary to attain high position; although his was such a nature that it is probable he would have made a brilliant mark in any of the walks of life.

His marvellous powers and high intellect attracted the attention of the whole university, and great hopes were indulged in that he would prove a lasting honour to his tutors, and indeed to the whole country. Nothing now hindered his onward course. The time passed unnoted by any great event until the year 1503, after he had been there about two years, when an accident occurred that well-nigh proved fatal to him.

One morning he left Erfurt in company with his friend, the son of his benefactress of Eisenach, for Mansfeld, to visit his parents. They were both armed with swords, as was the custom of those times, and with spirits light and wallets full they joyfully made their way through

field and forest, singing as they went. Bounding along by the banks of the river Holme, through the Golden Meadow, where many noble cloisters and imperial palaces were situated, Martin by some accident ran his sword into his foot, and to the dismay of his friend the blood gushed out in a stream; he had cut into the main artery. His friend, leaving him in the care of some peasants, ran back to Erfurt for a physician who, when he reached the place where Martin was lying, found it a matter of great difficulty to close the wound.

They contrived to carry him back to the city, when he was quickly put to bed, and in the middle of the night his friend who was sitting up with him saw the wound suddenly burst out afresh. The danger was great, and even Martin himself gave up hope, and, believing that death was at hand, fervently committed his soul to the Creator. But at length the remedies applied produced a salutary effect, the bandages closed the wound, and once again the blood was stopped.

Two months after this, in June 1503, Martin took his first degree; but a few months later

he was attacked by a severe illness, which carried him almost through the gates of death.

The anxiety of his friends was intense, and the university authorities also openly expressed their sorrow; they one and all fervently prayed for the speedy recovery of the brilliant student. As he lay apparently in the last extremity and expecting death, an old priest went to his bedside and said: "Be of good comfort, my brother, you will not die this time. God will yet make a great man of you, and you shall comfort many others. Whom God loveth and proposeth to make a blessing, upon him He early layeth the cross, and in that school those who patiently endure learn much."

These prophetic words, so bright and cheering, gave new hope to all present; and to their joy they proved true. Martin recovered, to renew his exertions and win fresh honours, and continuing thus for two years longer he won the title of doctor of philosophy.

Luther's long and arduous course of learning well fitted him in after life to battle with the subtle scholars who upheld the dogmas of the Romish Church; it also made him a true and

earnest advocate of a complete national education, for in later years, when his words fell as from one having authority, he says :

“ Look to your children, for parents are sometimes like ostriches, they harden themselves against their little ones, and content with having laid the egg, care nothing for it afterwards. The prosperity of a city consists not alone in making money nor mansions, nor possessing splendid armouries; its real strength is to number the learned and well cultivated among its citizens. Schools must yield teachers and preachers. Domestic tuition is quite insufficient; the magistrates ought to superintend the instruction of children, the establishment of schools is one of the most important duties which they have to perform. It will be an evil day for Germany if her schools are permitted to decay, or if they should ever be neglected or despised.”

In the year 1505, shortly after assuming the doctor's gown, he was horrified to hear of the assassination of one of his most intimate friends named Alexis. Upon a mind like Luther's this acted with strange power; it seemed to bring death so near, and awakened thoughts

which had slumbered deep down in his heart. As yet he knew only of the terrible side of religion, of death, and judgment, and hell. He had not yet learned anything of God's universal love; he had dwelt among the records of great minds of long bygone ages, and his views were tinged accordingly. The ancient classics enthralled him, and the Almighty seemed to him but a prototype of the pagan deities, who breathed out terrible fires and fierce thunders against those who omitted the least iota of a sacrificial life.

The few bibles in existence were kept carefully hidden away in secret places, in order that the people should not read them; and the few wretched translations of portions of the apocryphal New Testament only served to deepen the spiritual gloom, and fasten still more firmly the slavechain of Rome.

In the university library, where Luther spent most of his time, he found that which he had never before seen, a Latin Bible. It caused him great wonder that it contained so much more than the *Evangelia*, then read in the churches. Every minute which he could snatch from his academic duties he devoted to

a careful perusal of this, to him, most wonderful book. The story of Samuel and his mother had especial charms for him ; he read it quickly through and through with real delight, and he wished that God would only bestow such a book upon him. He thought of his own mother who had always tried to maintain such a pious life ; and he wished that God's voice could be heard by him so clearly that there should be no room for mistake in the direction he was to pursue during life.

As one of the doctors, he had to instruct the students, who thronged to his lecture room on every occasion when his classes met, and their eager desire to learn of their tutor induced him to use every exertion to meet their ever-growing desires. But a great change in the life of Luther was fast approaching.

In those days, when the laws of health were not so strictly observed, great plagues would frequently burst forth, and sometimes quite depopulate certain districts which were perhaps a little less cleanly than usual. Then, as now, those who were careful suffered with the careless ; the plague, like fire, never stopped to inquire who took proper precautions, but

swept away all alike. It was one of those often recurring scourges that broke out in Germany in the year 1505, and spreading over the town of Erfurt threw that place into a terrible consternation; great numbers of the professors, masters, and students fled from the university to their homes in distant villages, and some to the hamlets in the more favoured resorts of the Thuringian forests. But Luther remained at his post; though this epidemic, following so closely upon the assassination of his friend, seemed to overwhelm him, he only saw in the visitation the awful presence of an avenging God from whom there was no flight.

The terror of the plague increased when one day, while on the high road near Erfurt, he was exposed to the sudden fury of a violent thunderstorm. A deep gloom fell upon his spirits; he appeared to hear in the thunder only the voice of his Maker demanding retribution for the sins he had committed. Suddenly a thunderbolt fell close to his feet; and though it did not harm him he imagined that his hour was come, and the fearful terrors of death and judgment flashed so vividly on his mind that, falling on his knees, he vowed that if only God would

spare his life he would forthwith dedicate his whole future to His honour and service.

Although this vow was wrung from him while under the influence of terror, he did not forget it, nor did he seek to evade it, but shortly after calling together a party of his college friends he entertained them in the liveliest manner. The evening was passed in singing and feasting, and to the joy of his companions he appeared to be in better spirits than he had been for some time. The hours flew by in mirth and music until the time for breaking up came, when to their utmost consternation he informed them that he had determined upon closing his academic course in order to enter the Augustinian monastery as a novice.

At first some of them treated it as a joke, but his looks and bearing soon banished that idea, and they tried hard to dissuade him from his purpose; but their arguments had no effect, and they left him with sorrow in their hearts for the loss of their brilliant companion. The next morning, after sending his master's ring and gown to his parents, and settling all his affairs, he entered the monastery with no other companions than his Plautus and his Virgil.

He was received with open arms by the monks, who applauded his resolution. They well knew that the bright scholar would grace any cause; they were fully cognisant of his great reputation, and they deemed it a god-send to get him into their order.

Meanwhile the university was in a great *furor* at his disappearance; some were indignant with him, and some with the monks who, they declared, had taken advantage of a fervent impulse and had drawn him into their net; while still others sneered at him and insinuated that he had his eye on the tiara.

But those who knew him were confident that he viewed it in too serious a light to make the convent a steppingstone to anything but a true spiritual life. In the monastery he was a thorough hermit; he fasted, and watched, and practised all the most rigid severities until he absolutely made himself ill. His superiors, deeming that he possessed a haughty temperament, tried his fitness for his adopted vocation in various ways. He was ordered more frequently than anybody else to sweep the cells, to open and shut the church doors, wind up the clock, ring the bell

for matins and vespers, and to go with a large sack to beg for his monastery.



One day, when out on his rounds begging as usual, and as he was wearily trudging along with bare feet through the deep snow, he called at a house where one of his intimate friends was, who as soon as he caught sight of Martin's face hurried to the door with a loaf in his hands, but the lowly beggar dared not meet him with the hand of friendship as of yore. He bowed low as he received the bread, until his forehead nearly touched the ground, and murmuring a "thanks" tried to pass on, but his friend said :

"Martin, do you not know me?"

“I am on the service of the convent,” he replied; “and it is against the rules to converse or to linger.”

“God help thee, brother Martin,” returned his friend; at which Martin half turned as if about to speak, crossed himself, and as a maid-servant threw him some broken victuals, bowed low once more, and meekly said, “God be praised for every gift He bestoweth”; and he went on his toilsome quest for alms, with stooping form and downcast eyes. The flush of youth and health quite faded from the thin and hollow cheeks, the fire of wit and fancy was all dimmed in the red sunken eye

So severe was his manner of life that one day, when called from his cell, no answer was returned. The monks burst open the door, and found him stretched apparently lifeless on the floor. Nothing that they did seemed able to awaken him from the deathlike swoon produced by excessive fasting and penance. At last, knowing his fondness for music, they fetched the choristers, who chanted their hymns over his prostrate form; and this proved successful, for he soon revived; but he went on in the same dull wearisome routine until the university of

Wittemberg interfered, as did his kind friend Dr. Staupitz, and their united efforts put an end to his physical trials.

It may be imagined that Martin's father did not view this proceeding with any favour; he was in reality very angry that his son should relinquish all the honours which he had gained, and he thought it little better than suicide, certainly ungrateful to him who had struggled and denied himself in order that his son should succeed. The shrewd hard-working peasant had very small regard for the monks whom he was inclined to consider a parcel of lazy drones, but he could not interfere. He had been content to go through any toil and suffer any privation, so that Martin, the pride of the family, might have scope to develop his abilities; but to have the fruit of all his work buried in a convent was the most bitter trial he could have endured. As for Martin himself, the most affectionate son and the most eager student, one whose sense of filial duty was so marked, surely the conflict must have been terrible to have induced him to give up his brilliant career at the outset!

At length, his novitiate having expired, a

day was selected for his ordination. Honest old John Luther had been so exasperated with his son, that for a long time he would not consent to be present; but giving way, they choose a time when he could come to view the ceremony. Having made up his mind to forgive, he forgave like a father, and went in pomp with precious gifts to do him honour. He rode to the convent with an escort of twenty horsemen, and gave his son a present of twenty florins. Poor Martin, who had striven so hard to gain forgiveness of his sins by penances most severe, was much cheered by the reconciliation; and at the feast which followed the ceremony, when his father sat by his side in the assembly, he tried not only to obtain pardon but approval. But in the last he failed. In vain he stated the motives that had led to his vow; in vain did the monks around support and applaud all he said: the old man was not to be moved.

“Didst thou never hear,” returned the hardy miner, unabashed by the learned company, “that a son must be obedient to his parents? And, you learned men, did you never read ‘thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother’? God grant this may not be a snare of the devil.”

The son attempted no defence, but remained quite silent; it was now too late, he was a priest, and on board that ship which he had seen at Magdeburg bearing only the priest, whose lofty mission was, he deemed, to help others.





CHAPTER III.

LUTHER having now become priest and monk, and everything being accomplished according to his vow, fell a victim to sadness, perplexities, and temptations of the flesh, and to the mischievous shafts and subtleties of the world.

He had thought that happiness was to be found in the walls of a convent, but in this he was grievously mistaken. He fulfilled all the duties of his office as faithfully as possible, he confessed according to the rules laid down by his superiors ; but peace came not, and despair seized him, so that he knew not in which direction to flee.

Soon afterwards he was attacked by another illness that reduced him to the brink of the grave. This was in the second year of his

abode in the convent ; and while labouring under the afflictions of body and mind, his friend and mentor Doctor Staupitz went to him, and administered true comfort to the poor sufferer. The good doctor had himself undergone similar trials, and no man was better able to advise in such cases. Under his guidance Luther soon grew better, and by his advice used to take long walks into the surrounding villages, and there try to teach the rude ignorant peasants all he knew of a higher life ; he taught earnestly and therefore successfully. He laboured at the study of theology as hard as he had formerly done at law and the classics, and became as noted for learning among the monks as he had been at the university.

About this time Frederick the Wise, the Elector of Saxony, was founding a new university at Wittemberg, and he wished to obtain the most learned men in the country for professors and tutors. Hearing through Doctor Staupitz of the abilities of Luther, he offered him the position of professor of philosophy, which was accepted, and the young monk took up his abode in that city, which was to be his home for the rest of his life.

Luther's duties now occupied most of his time ; he was one of those who did with all his might whatsoever his hand found to do. He obtained the applause of all with whom he came in contact, but this he cared very little about : duty was to him a passion.

He had not long been here, before the senate of Wittemberg at the recommendation of Doctor Staupitz invited him to the office of public preacher, along with the other duties of his professorship ; but he did not feel himself able to perform such a work, and it was only after the most pressing entreaties of the doctor that he at last consented, though he was alarmed at the responsibility, and urged that it would soon kill him. But to this the doctor replied : " Well, my son, even if you die, it will be in the service of God, and how noble the sacrifice ! "

The first time he preached was in the Augustinian monastery of which he was an inmate ; and soon, overcoming his fears, he preached so earnestly that the attention of everybody was speedily rivetted upon him.

He continued thus for a time, ministering to others and gaining fresh strength each day.

He adopted a new style in the pulpit ; instead of filling his sermon with quotations of other men, he simply took a text from the Bible, and drawing thence his inspiration he could not fail to attract, if only by reason of novelty. He told the old, old story with such simple pathos that the hearts of his hearers were touched, and he was so successful that crowds thronged to hear him on every occasion.

This course was arming him for the conflicts that would shortly commence. He was storing his mind with the riches of knowledge which would soon be needed. It was not for an ignorant upstart to meet the cunning men who stood around the throne of the pope, nor for a rash youth to essay that which had made many brave hearts quail and brought many noble men to the stake ; but of this conflict he was as yet entirely ignorant, he dreamed as little of becoming the great reformer as did the Jewish shepherd of becoming king of Israel.

But the shifting scenes of the world were hurrying by, and events were unfolding that should bring him forward as the central figure, and the instructive history of this son of a German peasant will show how faithfully he

performed the mighty work assigned to him. A dispute had arisen between his own monastery and seven others, which made it necessary for an efficient person to journey to Rome, in order to represent the convent and adjust the points in dispute. Luther was deemed the most fitting, and with a light heart he quickly made his preparations; he was not overburdened with luggage nor money, for though he enjoyed several high positions the remuneration was very trivial, and had it not been for the generous kindness of some friends he would have been completely destitute. A trifling sum of money was allowed him for his journey, but so little that he would have to partly beg his way thither, and walk the whole distance; but these were not likely to prove obstacles in the path of our earnest hero.

This journey deserves to be recorded, for it was one which taught Luther many lessons, and he himself in after years said that he would not have missed it for a hundred thousand florins. It was in the month of May, 1510, that Luther, accompanied by a brother monk, none other than the eldest son of Dame Ursula Cotta, began his travels. There is now on his face a look of

grave repose ; he had drawn a wealth of comfort from the Bible, and in preaching to others he had himself received a holy ministration ; the terrible conflicts of mind that he had passed through had strengthened him, and elevated him to such a sphere that he, who expected to find Italy the paradise of peace and purity, was little prepared to find the whole country a swamp of profligacy and vice.

Passing through the Black Forest, on through the country, over hill and dale, through village and hamlet, begging his provision and lodging, and in return performing mass at the various churches, going by way of Munich, the journey enlivened by spiritual conversation with his friend and brother monk, he at last entered Lombardy, and there saw the great mountains with snowy peaks, and the flowing rivers with riches in their bosom, so different from the rugged Tyrol which he had just left behind. Journeying down into the plains of Lombardy, he saw a land like the summerland of angels, the trees rich in foliage and alive with song and joy, the lakes and rivers reflecting the splendours of heaven and ministering to the wants of earth, the waving corn and the bloom-

ing flowers, the vines festooning the trees as if nature had garlanded herself for a perpetual and holy festival.

But the beauty of nature was bordered by a deep black fringe of wickedness, and the reckless immorality of the priests and people was in strange and sad contrast with the lustrous wealth of God's beneficence.

He entered the Benedictine monastery for rest and refreshment, and was entertained in that rich convent like a prince. He saw there the most splendid furniture and the most sumptuous apparel, and these he found difficult to reconcile with vows of poverty and renunciation of the world. The tables were loaded with the choicest viands, which also much perplexed him; but he said nothing until Friday came, when, in defiance of all the rules of the order and of their voluntary vows, the tables were again spread with the chief luxuries of life: but the upright monk would touch none of them, and not only did he refuse to partake of the forbidden things but stood up and sternly denounced these proceedings.

“The church and the pope forbid such things!” he exclaimed indignantly, for the out-

ward and avowed poverty of these monks struck him as being the rankest hypocrisy.

But his interference was near costing him his life, for in a moment the whole brotherhood rose up in anger, and with flaming eyes scornfully assailed the poor German who dared to charge them with the violation of their vows.

Luther however stood calm and unmoved in the storm he had raised, but the monks did not confine their anger to words, they attempted his life by poison and he was compelled to hasten away for his life. At last the pilgrimage was over, and Rome, the holy city where Peter and Paul were martyred, lay before him, and at the sight of his goal he prostrated himself on the earth and exclaimed, "Hail, sacred Rome! thrice sacred for the blood of the martyrs shed here."

But if the vicious conduct of the Italians shocked him, how much more was he horrified when he entered Rome to witness the open profligacy of the priests and the people in the city itself. It seemed to him that all the scum and sin of the world were abiding there, and in consequence every crime was openly committed. Full of fervid zeal he had hastened to arrive in time for the festival of St. John's, for there is

a Romish proverb which says, "Happy the mother whose son shall celebrate mass in Rome on St. John's Eve," and he thought to make his mother supremely happy by performing the office at the right time; but he was disappointed, for the crowds of priests who were all anxious to do the same prevented him.

He visited all the holy places and saw the wonderful relics, he performed mass whenever he could, but his earnest feelings would not permit him to hasten the ceremony for convenience sake, and the impatient Italian priests often interrupted him by "Go on, go on!"

They laughed at his pious endeavours to render it with becoming solemnity, and contemptuously told him that while he was doing it once they could go through it thirty times. He seemed to be almost the only person in the capital of the Christian world who did believe; he found the priests openly boasting of their free thinking and acting, and they laughed in high glee as they told each other how that when they were consecrating the host they would mutter, instead of the right words, "Bread thou art and bread thou wilt remain, wine thou art and wine thou wilt remain," and

the people received not the consecrated host as they imagined but a mere piece of bread.

It was impossible that the pope, Julian II., could be ignorant of the wickedness so openly practised. It is probable Rome was never so vile as at this period ; while Luther was there a murder was committed, one of many, and the people shrugged their shoulders and whispered that no notice would be taken because a cardinal was concerned in the affair.

But the pope had other things to occupy his mind, he was just then engaged on plans for a war against the French : the representative of " peace and goodwill " was preparing to carry desolation and death to many a peaceful home, and he troubled not to teach the people, either by practice or by precept, to lead holy lives.

We cannot therefore wonder that Luther should try to hasten on the business which brought him to a place where he heard them declare that " if there be a hell, Rome is built over it," and he grieved over the city as Christ pitied Jerusalem.

But before he departed he resolved to accomplish the ascent of the holy staircase, which once they say formed part of Pilate's house and by

a miracle was transported from Jerusalem to Rome, and whoever crept up step by step on his bare knees to the very top received absolution for a thousand years.

When he reached the spot he found the cold, hard stones worn into hollows by the knees of penitents and pilgrims, and he himself now began the toilsome task : slowly and reverently he mounted each step until he was half way up, when suddenly there flashed across his mind " The just shall live by faith," and, starting up, he lifted his face heavenwards as if for pardon, and turning round he quickly walked back again.

At the end of a few months, Luther's affairs being satisfactorily arranged, he was glad to quit Rome. He had seen everything he wished to see, and far, far more than he had expected ; he had been a witness of the worst crimes and the most abominable hypocrisy, and he was powerless to hinder the evil tide ; if at any time he expostulated with the priests in the city, they only laughed and said :

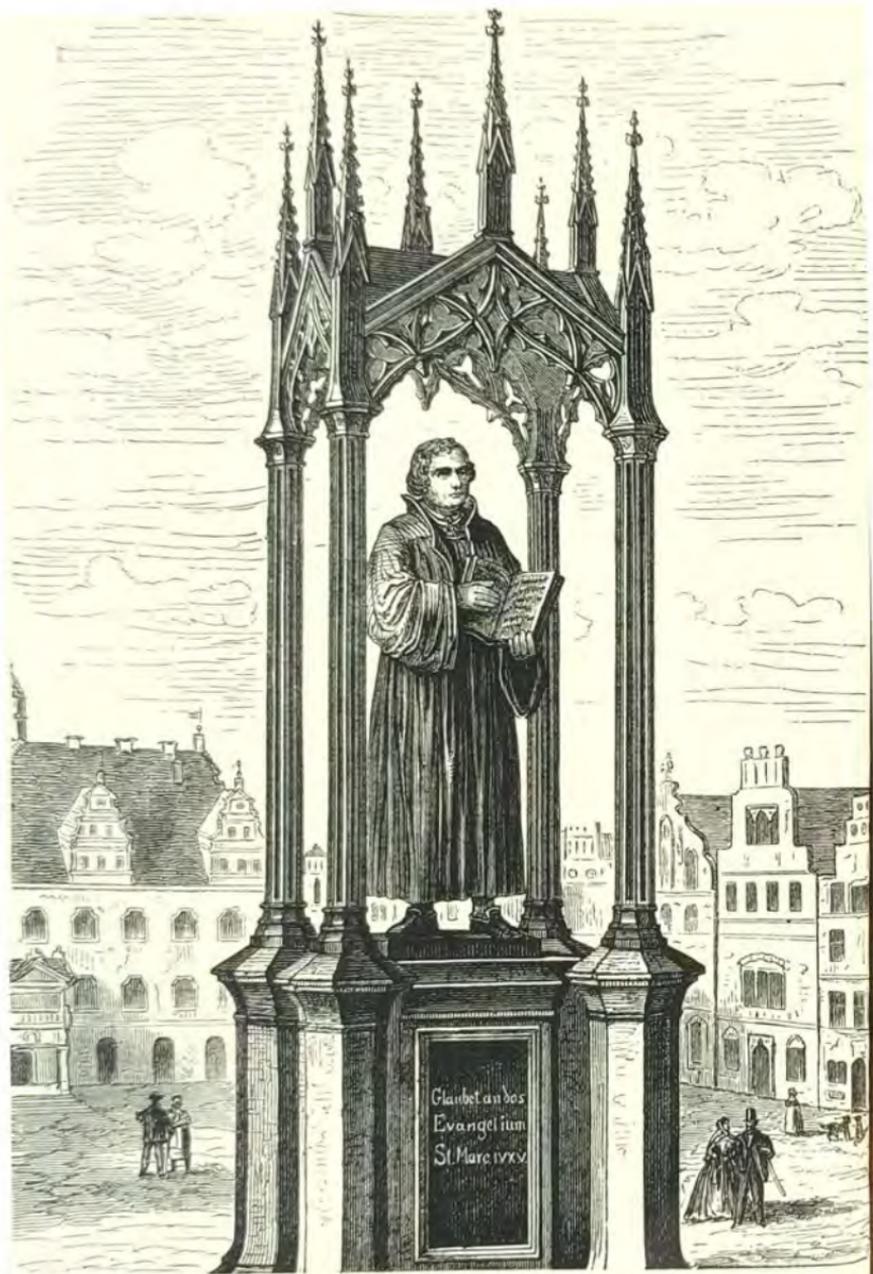
" You Germans take everything in such desperate earnestness : it is probably owing to your long winters and the heaviness of your

northern climate, which no doubt must be very depressing to the spirits."

And Luther returned to his own country with heart unsoiled by the unholy contact, and purpose unchanged to serve God with his whole soul and body.

He went home and spent the next few years in study, teaching, and preaching, but the dread hour of battle is approaching, the conflict between light and darkness is about to begin. It is God and Luther against pope, devil, and emperor. The trumpet sounds, and the rising mists of popish ignorance and hypocrisy reveal to our eyes the Great Reformer.





LUTHER'S MONUMENT AT WITTEMBERG.



CHAPTER IV.

THE great battle of the Reformation began in 1517, when the pope, requiring money, sent out his messengers to obtain it by selling pardons and indulgences; pardons for sins committed, and indulgences to commit others. This in part applied to the dead as well as to the living.

One of these messengers, John Tetzel, was empowered to grant pardons to all who had gold to pay for them; he went to the towns and villages of Germany, and loudly proclaimed his mission in the churches and the market places, wherever the people were assembled.

He was a vile and wicked man, and had once been condemned to death for his crimes, but escaped through the intervention of powerful friends, and now, as the pope's agent, was

frantically calling upon the people to give their money in exchange for his pardons. In this mission he succeeded remarkably well, and if, as it sometimes happened, the people were slow in buying he would proceed to most extravagant lengths in his promises. Upon entering a town he would cause a pulpit to be erected with the arms of the pope suspended over it, and, ascending his platform, with a loud voice he commenced telling of the wondrous benefits everybody would secure by a purchase. He declared that they were the most precious gifts of God, for they saved both the living and the dead, and the moment the money clinked upon the bottom of his box which he had before him, that instant a soul would be released from purgatory, and if a man, living, desired absolution, no matter whether the crime were the blackest imaginable, directly he paid the money he would be pardoned.

Thus he proceeded from place to place, crying : " Priest, noble, old and young, hearken to your parents and friends who are dead, and calling to you from the bottom of the abyss, ' We are in torture ! a small alms would deliver us. You can give it, and you will not.' "

Hard heedless man, with twelve groats thou canst take thy father out of misery, and thou wilt not."

And when the deluded people purchased these curious wares, they found written :

"I, by virtue of the apostolic power, do absolve thee from all punishments which thou may'st deserve, also from all sins, however shameful. I take away every taint of unfitness. I release thee from all punishments which thou wouldst have endured in purgatory. Though thou hast been the vilest criminal, I admit thee again to the holy sacrament and make thee at once innocent and pure, so that in the moment of thy death the doors of paradise shall be open to thee. This shall remain in force to the end of thy life."

At length he arrived at Jüterbok, near Wittenberg, and there began his unholy traffic; and when the people bought his pardons and went to Luther, their priest, for confession, they told him of their bargains, and how under their shelter they felt safe, even though living in constant sin.

But Luther refused to acknowledge them, and told the people how they were deluded; he

also denied them absolution, and ordered them to be penitent, instead, for their crimes.

When Tetzel heard of this he became violently enraged, and cursed and threatened that he would cause all to be burned at the stake who dared to dispute his authority.

But Luther was not a man to be affrighted when his conscience told him he was in the right, and he still refused to absolve all who went to him with Tetzel's pardons in their hands, and thinking that the pope must surely be unaware of this barefaced fraud he wrote to the Archbishop of Mayence and informed him that there were persons hawking about indulgences and teaching the common people that they could by their means be saved. The letter produced no reply; Luther did not then know that the archbishop himself was to receive a portion of the money obtained by such means, so finding his remonstrances of no avail he proceeded to take stronger measures. At the festival of All Saints, in November, 1517, he drew up and read in the great church of Wittemberg ninety-five propositions against the sale of indulgences. After this ceremony, like the English captain who nailed his colours

to the mast and swore to die in their defence, so Luther directly afterwards nailed his propositions to the church doors and challenged the world to prove they were wrong.

This daring conduct astounded everybody, and all wondered to see a monk defy that power before which emperors and kings had knelt in terror ; but Luther dared do this and more ; he had thrown down the gage of battle, and in calm strength he awaited the result.

He was not to wait long, for several champions started forward, and with loud voices denounced him as a blasphemous heretic and an enemy of the church, and threatened him with the direst consequences ; some even frantically called upon the pope, Leo X., to silence him with fire, and others wrote long tracts against him ; but as their arguments were not drawn from the Bible, the foundation of Christianity, Luther had little difficulty in proving their worthlessness.

It may be imagined that the indulgence-monger, Tetzl, would not favour Luther. At this time he was at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, driving his impious trade, and while there he

saw Luther's propositions, which had flown like wildfire all over Europe

As soon as he saw what Luther had done, he, foaming with rage, set to work and issued counter propositions to the number of one hundred and six, in which he maintained the most impious doctrines; he claimed that the pope could do no wrong, that he was above everything and everybody, for he had the power to bind and loose as he wished.

And, not content with this, he issued another series of propositions and railed at Luther like a madman; he flung at him the vilest names, and after much noise and flourish he concluded by publicly burning Luther's propositions in the city.

But Luther's heroic conduct had drawn around him many friends, who only wanted an efficient leader to shake off the papal chains. When they heard of Tetzels insolence they retaliated by collecting all his counter propositions, with which they made a bonfire in the public square of Wittemberg.

Luther was not sorry that such a pack of rubbish should meet with the fate it so richly deserved, but he was grieved at the ill feeling

which his friends exhibited. However, he had gone too far to retract, though up to this time he firmly upheld the dignity of the pope, to whom he addressed several letters, hoping that when he was better informed of the wickedness carried on in his name and under his authority he would at once use his power for good. But he was deceived ; the pope read the letters, but did not trouble himself further ; he said it was only a petty squabble between the monks, and as for Luther's propositions he considered they must have been written by some drunken Dutchman.

In the meantime Luther carried on his work of preaching and teaching with all earnestness and humility ; he felt no rancour against the pope nor against his opponents. In his letters he used the most respectful terms, and heartily wished that the present difficulties might be removed, not that he intended to go back one inch from his position—he only trusted that the evils against which he preached and wrote might be removed.

But Luther did not then know that the pope was himself too much interested in upholding Tetzel and his minions to listen to the cry of

an obscure monk; money was urgently required, and had to be obtained.

And the battle raged, at present confined to Saxony, but it was soon to burst forth in other places. Luther was not permitted to rest, he had sounded the charge, he had drawn down upon himself the fierce anger of the pope's agents, and he must abide the result.

Most nobly then did Luther stand by his colours, nor did he dream of surrender; for many months he held his position against the attacks of the most learned defenders of indulgences, but at last the pope himself was aroused; he had discovered that it was not a mere squabble between a monk and his superiors, but the beginning of a great conflict.

It had been begun in good earnest and was not likely to be continued in a trifling mood. Strong men and mighty men were rousing up; they saw the portentous signs, and they were ranging themselves under the different banners of the opposing forces; the air seemed full of the din, and men wondered at the steadfast bearing of the monk, and however much he was abused he gained respect and support.

Many gallant helpers came forward to assist

him, foremost among whom was Frederick the Elector of Saxony, whose subject Luther was. This prince openly avowed himself a believer in the doctrines expounded by Luther, and he proved a faithful ally not only to Luther but to the cause of the Reformation.

He was a prince justly called the Wise ; he encouraged the growth of learning, and he was grateful to Luther, for by his means the new university of Wittemberg had flourished and become exceedingly popular. It was now one of the chief centres of learning ; men flocked from all parts to hear the great preacher and learn of him, and when the storm of papal wrath burst forth they stood nobly by their champion. Then did the pope rise up in fierce anger, and sent forth a command that Luther should appear at Rome within sixty days to answer for his conduct.

To this Luther objected, for he knew the danger, and the elector supported him and demanded that he should be heard in his own country before a tribunal appointed by the pope. Luther full well knew that if he went to Rome he would be entering the gates of death ; the recollection of the martyrdom of Savonarola

was too strong in his mind to trust the pope's word. He knew that if he fell the cause would be thrown back for many years, perhaps for centuries.

The pope, finding that Luther was not to be entrapped, consented that he should be heard in Augsburg, and it was well for Luther that this was gained, for it afterwards transpired that he was already condemned at Rome, and if he had gone there his martyrdom would have followed as a matter of course.

This point having been conceded, Luther armed himself for the coming struggle, and prepared to meet his bitter enemies at Augsburg.





CHAPTER V.

EARLY on the morning of October 9th, 1518, Luther left Wittemberg to meet the pope's legate at Augsburg. He was accompanied by the prayers and blessings of his friends, many of whom were suspicious of the designs of Rome; but Luther's powerful friend, the elector, had appointed him a strong convoy and given him a safe conduct. He had also earnestly recommended him to the people of Augsburg, so that when he arrived they received him with every attention, and specially warned him against the machinations of the Italians who they said were not to be trusted. As soon as he had rested from the fatigues of his long journey and had recruited his strength, for he was in ill health, he received a visit

from Urban di Serra Longa, a papist, who at once urged him to retract, but this was not the intention of Luther's mind. Then Urban invited him to visit the Cardinal Cajetan, the pope's legate, who was to be his judge, but Luther refused unless a safe conduct was granted him likewise from the Emperor of Germany. At the end of three days the Bishop of Trent went to Luther with a safe conduct from the emperor, upon the receipt of which Luther waited upon the cardinal, who, like all the other agents of the pope, had only one cry upon his lips, "Retract, retract!" But although Luther accorded to him the most profound respect and the most gentle humility, he dared not belie himself, and he firmly refused to do aught to sully the teachings of his Bible.

The cardinal had thought, when he saw how respectfully Luther treated him, that he would have no trouble in gaining his submission, but Luther could be gentle as the evening's breeze and yet firm as the foundations of the earth. The next day he again waited upon the cardinal, who again commanded him to retract, but he demanded to be heard, upon which the cardinal in a great rage asked him how, if he

dared defy the pope like this, would he escape and whither would he fly ?

“I shall be safe under heaven,” replied Luther undaunted ; he was not to be frightened into silence or submission by sternness, and he bravely held his position.

He had been cited to appear at Augsburg to argue the points in dispute, as he imagined, but in this he was wrong, the cardinal had no thought of that—he had come to demand submission, and failing that, to get him into his hands.

Luther met the cardinal several times, but nothing came of it ; to everything he said the scornful reply was, “Retract, retract ! Acknowledge thy errors, whether thou believest them to be errors or not. The pope commands thee to do this.”

Finding that justice would be refused to him, and having strong reasons to believe that they would violate his safe conduct, he hurriedly quitted Augsburg early on the morning of the 20th of October. His friend Doctor Staupitz had provided him with a horse and a guide who knew the country well, and without boots or arms he made his way back to Wittemberg,

but he had left behind a document stating that he would submit if they would meet him and prove from the Bible that he was wrong. This was nailed to the gates of the convent after he had gone by a friendly monk. It was well for Luther that he had hastened from Augsburg, his fears regarding his safety being well grounded, for Rome was at the same time making application to the Elector of Saxony to deliver him into her hands.

The cardinal was furiously angry when he learned that Luther had escaped, and he wrote letters to the elector pressing him either to banish him from his dominions or send him to Rome; but the elector replied that since Doctor Luther had appeared before them at Augsburg they ought to be satisfied, and since they could not refute him they ought not to compel him to retract, and he bluntly refused to banish him or send him to Rome.

This firmness on the part of Luther's protector strengthened his arm, but fearing that it might involve the elector in serious difficulties he resolved to quit Wittenberg for a more distant and safe retreat, for he well knew that his enemies were trying every means at their com-

mand to bring him to ruin ; they threatened Luther's friend, and when that failed they attempted to bribe him by presenting him with the Golden Rose, a high mark of distinction, and one seldom awarded to any but kings, as a reward for obedience. But the elector was neither moved by threats nor cajoled by flattery ; to the one he answered firmly, and to the other coldly.

Luther was well aware of these proceedings, and though he was safe he passed the autumn of 1518 in constant alarm ; he did not fear open combat, though he might well be disquieted at the possibility of treachery. But it did not hinder his preaching or teaching ; he used every opportunity to increase the strength of his cause, both with the old and the young. We may well contemplate with admiration this learned man in the children's schools, patiently teaching them the simple truths of the Bible, and the young hearts were strangely drawn towards him as he each day unfolded fresh beauties of the kingdom of God.

In January 1519 the Emperor of Germany died, and by his declared wish the Elector of Saxony was appointed regent of the empire

during the interregnum, and Luther's enemies, finding that they could not snatch him from his protector, now adopted a conciliatory tone, and Charles von Miltitz was sent to Germany vested with great powers to end the dispute if possible. When he entered Germany he found the whole country enthusiastic about Luther and the cause of the Reformation; his writing and his translations of various portions of the Bible were in everybody's hands, and the papal messenger saw that the little cloud no bigger than a man's hand had grown to enormous proportions, and while its richness was ripening the good seed, it was brooding over the Romish power with a gloom unspeakable.

Miltitz visited Luther many times, and professed himself anxious only for his good, but with supreme cunning he tried to appeal to his vanity; he told him, with mock humility, that he had got all the world on his side, and that the pope was so anxious for peace that even now he would be satisfied with a simple admission of error, and hoped that he would give up his antagonism and be received back into the loving arms of the church.

He also wished for Luther to go and explain

his views to the Archbishop of Treves, but Luther was not to be ensnared by such fulsome flattery; he knew that under all this apparent cordiality there lurked the vengeful thirst for his blood, and he knew that if once he left the protection of the elector that thirst would quickly be gratified; and he answered the crafty envoy that he knew of his being burned in effigy at Rome, and that he had neither time



nor money to go wandering about, but would meet the archbishop at Wittemberg.

He also, to show his desire for peace and goodwill, promised to hold his peace respecting the sale of indulgences if their traffic were stopped and his opponents would for ever

renounce them, and further that he would submit the questions at issue to a general council.

Miltitz agreed to this, elated that he had succeeded so well ; he therefore repaired to Leipsic and cited Tetzel, the indulgence-monger, to appear before him, and there he accused him of being the author of all the dissensions that had sprung up, and of embezzling the money which he had collected from the people. These changes of policy astounded Tetzel, for he had been made a doctor for his zeal in selling the pardons and upholding their efficacy ; and now when he found that he was made a scapegoat, and deserted by his accomplices, he was overwhelmed and soon after he died in despair and disgrace, and the following year Miltitz himself was drowned in the Rhine at Mayence, some say when drunk.

Meanwhile, Luther had accepted a challenge from Doctor Eck to dispute with him at Leipsic, and he travelled thither with a strong and friendly band of learned men who favoured his views and supported him.

The discussion took place in the castle of the Pleissenburg, before a noble and brilliant

assembly ; the first few days were occupied by Doctor Eck and Carlstadt, Luther's friend, but this was mere skirmishing, the great battle lay between Luther and Eck.

The reformer attacked papal supremacy, purgatory, penance, and absolution, and basing his arguments on the Bible he steadily moved on from point to point with great power, with each blow he dealt growing stronger, until, at the end of several days, he had in the opinion of the learned completely vanquished his opponent, who, angry and baffled, hastened to Rome to induce the pope to use all the power at his command to destroy Luther.

Then Luther issued his famous Appeal to the nobles of Germany, urging them to support the cause of truth and right. In this Appeal he denied the sole right of the pope to interpret the Scriptures at his pleasure ; he held up to scorn the avarice and cunning of the priests, who he declared adopted every means to grasp the gold of prince and peasant alike, and not content with that, they held them all in bondage.

He told them of the state of beggary to which Italy was reduced, because, instead of using the

wealth for the improvement of the people, they built and endowed rich monasteries which were hotbeds of vice and immorality of the worst description. He bade the people rise up and throw off the terrible yoke of spiritual slavery, and no longer be the mere puppets of the priests, but he urged them to do it peaceably and not cause bloodshed.

These stirring words swiftly circulated through all the German states, and were the means of rousing the people to a true knowledge of their condition. So eager were they to get the Appeal that although four thousand copies were sold as soon as they were printed, they could not be supplied quickly enough to meet the wants of the people. Upon the nobles it acted like a signal of danger, and they rose up in their strength, and the cause of the Reformation daily grew and prospered.

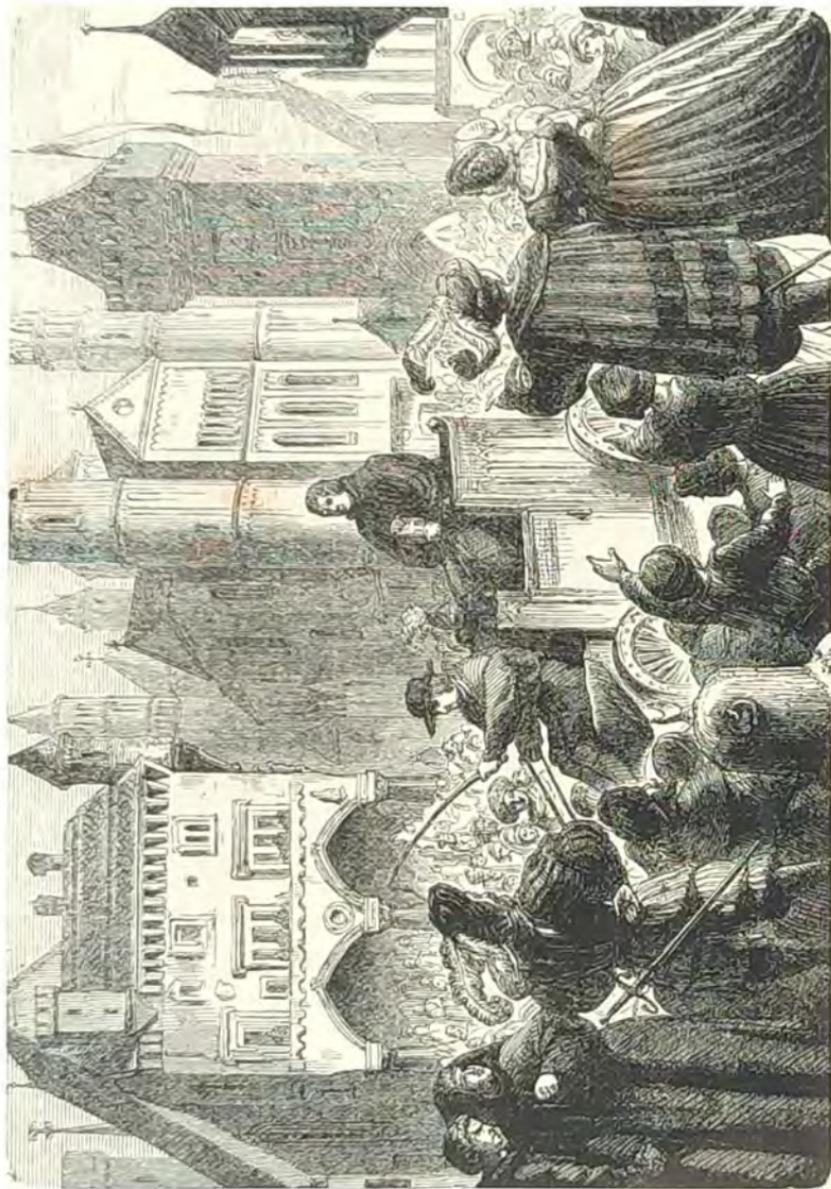
During this time Eck was in Rome, frantically imploring the pope to excommunicate Luther, and at last in the month of June 1520 the bull condemning Luther and his works arrived in Germany; but its power for evil was gone. Time was when such a thing was regarded as a terrible visitation amounting to a

curse, when John of England had been brought to his knees; and Henry IV., Emperor of Germany, had waited with pitiful humility for three days in the snow to gain forgiveness for his disobedience. But now, thanks to the dauntless Luther, it had lost its terrors, and upon its arrival it was greeted with derisive scorn; the people and the students in the university took it from the booksellers' shops and threw it into the river, saying "It is a bull, let us see if it can swim"; even the boys made fun of that which had formerly caused kings to tremble.

But even this was not the end, for at nine o'clock on the morning of December 10th a great fire was made at the east gate of Wittemberg, and Luther at the head of a great concourse of people went there and threw into the fire the books and rescripts of the pope, after which he stepped forth and flung the bull on the top, saying: "It is an old custom to burn bad books; thou hast afflicted the holy of the Lord, now may eternal fires afflict and consume thee." And amid the loud cheers of the throng the flames rose up and destroyed the cursing bull. This was an answer that astounded Rome,

it was an action so daring that all Europe stood amazed, and the timid were appalled for Luther ; but he calmly went on his way, steadily performing his ministering work, and fearing Rome no more than he did the embers of the bull which he had just burned. He had met Rome in battle, and had conquered her on the two great occasions at Augsburg and Leipsic ; and she, beaten in every contest, was not likely now to extend the Christian law of forgiveness. He knew now that reconciliation was impossible, and he prepared for the fresh conflicts which awaited him ; he marshalled together his powers, and taught them unity of action in Christian love and moral fortitude.

He knew that he could not rest on gathered laurels, but must ever be up and doing, for there had gone forth the sound of a trumpet heralding the supreme conflict which was to firmly establish the Reformation ; the miner's son was shortly to stand before the grandeur of the German Empire and the splendour of Rome.



LUTHER'S ENTRY INTO WORMS.



CHAPTER VI.

IN the year 1520 the grandson of the late emperor of Germany was crowned at Cologne as Charles V. He was not a gloomy fanatic, like his son and successor Philip II.; he cared for neither Luther nor the pope, except in so far as it suited his purpose to support either; so when the princes and nobles of the empire, roused by the appeal of Luther, demanded a council to consider the religious state of the people and define the power of Rome, he consented to preside at an assembly for those purposes, to be held at Worms. It was also demanded that Luther should be summoned to answer the charges of heresy brought against him, and to lay down his reasons of dissent.

But the papal authorities were anxious that Luther should not be allowed to speak; they held that he was already condemned by the

bull, and they demanded that he should suffer the penalty ; the emperor however, at the solicitations of the princes, commanded Luther to appear before the assembled states at Worms, and that he might be under no apprehension of violence he transmitted an imperial safe conduct which was to ensure him from danger.

From this point the Romish powers tried their hardest to prevent Luther's appearance at Worms ; they worked upon the fears of some



of his friends, and placed every obstacle in his way. But nothing could dissuade him from the journey ; he knew that the great battle of the Reformation was to be fought, and obeying the call of duty he started, followed by the

prayers and blessings of his supporters. As he was entering his carriage, he said to Melancthon: "Should I not return, and should my enemies put me to death, O my brother, cease not to teach and abide steadfastly in the faith. Labour in my place, for then I shall not be able to labour myself."

When he reached Erfurt, which lay on the route, he stopped and preached to the people, who thronged to hear the brave monk that but a few years before had walked those streets in threadbare garments begging for bread.

As he proceeded through the country his course was like that of a prince; peasants blessed him, and women entreated him not to trust his precious life among his enemies. A priest at Nuremberg brought out to him a portrait of Savonarola, who had been burned at Florence not forty years before; but his fate did not shake Luther, who said: "If I cannot go to Worms in health, I will be carried thither; for if the emperor summon me I cannot doubt it is the will of God. Expect everything of me but retractation and flight; fly I cannot, retract still less."

And when they reminded him of John Huss

he answered: "Though they make a fire reaching from Worms to Wittemberg and rising to the sky, I will pass through it in God's name. I will appear there and confess the Lord Jesus Christ."

Again, when he reached Oppenheim he received another warning, setting forth the danger of going on, and insinuating that the emperor's safe conduct would not save him; but he answered: "Go tell your masters, though there were as many devils in Worms as tiles on the roofs, I would enter it."

And when they pressed him to fly while there was time, he said: "Fly! no; I will enter Worms in the name of Jesus Christ."

His enemies dared not openly seize him on this memorable journey, on account of the emperor's safe conduct, supported as it was by a strong escort; but they resorted to every artifice to prevent him going onwards. As the safe conduct only covered a certain number of days, they well knew that if they could detain him somewhere until it had expired he would be in their power; to this end they prevailed upon Count Sickengen to invite Luther to his castle of Ebnburg and there detain for a few days,

when they could safely seize him ; but Luther would not be turned aside : he continued his journey, upheld by his great faith, and strengthened by the blessings of the crowds who thronged about him at every city on the route.

At one of his halting places a soldier contemptuously called out : "Are you the man who is to overturn popedom? How will you accomplish that?"

"I rely upon God Almighty, whose orders I have," returned Luther.

"I serve the emperor Charles," replied the soldier, "your master is greater than mine."

At Pfiffingheim, Luther saw a peasant planting young trees by the wayside. "Give me one of them," said he, "and I will place it in the earth. God grant my teaching may flourish as the branches of this tree will doubtless flourish."

The tree did flourish, and beneath its shade have been laid from time to time the bodies of enthusiastic Lutherans, whose dying breath directed that they should be buried near the Reformer's elm. The tree was struck by lightning in 1811, and was then cut down by the remorseless owner.

When Luther approached the end of his journey, and beheld the spires and the old bell-towers of Worms, he rose in his chariot and as the spirit of poetry came upon him he burst out singing the famous hymn * which has since been the war song of the Lutherans, and was sung by Gustavus Adolphus king of Sweden just previous to the battle of Lutzen where he was killed.

It was on the 16th April, 1521, that Luther arrived at Worms, having been fourteen days on the journey; he was accompanied by a brother of his order, and a noble Dane. Before the car marched the imperial herald in full dress, the eagle in his hand, and behind came Justus Jonas and his servant, also a great number of men preceded him on horseback.

At ten in the morning he made his entry into the city; great crowds of people of all ages flocked around to catch a sight of the daring monk who had shaken the Romish power which even now made another attempt to silence him; the priests implored the emperor to condemn him as John Huss had been condemned at the

* "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott." (A safe stronghold is our God.)

council of Constance, but Charles indignantly refused to dishonour his own safe conduct.

The day after his arrival he was cited to appear before the whole council of the imperial diet in the town hall. There were present the emperor, the Archbishop of Treves, six electors, an archduke, two landgraves, five margraves, twenty-seven dukes, besides a great number of archbishops, bishops, counts, nobles, and knights ; in all, 206 persons.

Luther's books were placed on the table, and he was asked if they belonged to him and whether he would retract them.

He replied that he would like to hear the titles read, and as to the second question he requested time to answer.

This request being at length granted, the following day he appeared before the bishops and those who were directed to confer with him ; but when he was again asked to retract he answered that if they could prove him to be wrong from the Bible he would retract, but he would on no account go in opposition to the Word.

The next day the imperial chamberlain and the herald went to his inn and conducted him

to the town hall along byeways, in order to avoid the crowds that had assembled in the principal streets; but in spite of this precaution vast numbers collected at the gates of the town hall and tried to enter with him, though the guards kept them back. Many persons had also got upon the roofs of houses, so anxious were they to see the brave monk.

As he proceeded up the hall several noblemen spoke cheering words to him. "Be bold," said they, "and fear not those who can kill the body but are powerless against the soul."

And the famous General Friendsberg put his hand on Luther's shoulder and said: "Take heed what thou doest, monk; thou art adventuring on a more perilous path than any of us have ever trod. But if thou art in the right, God will not abandon thee."

When before the illustrious assembly he was again asked to retract, but the same brave answer was given, that if they could prove he had spoken evil or said aught against the Scriptures, he would not only retract but would with his own hands throw his books into the fire.

And now in firm language he told the grand

assembly how he had been led to oppose the evils that had sprung up in the church, and how he was ready to answer for his conduct with his life. For two hours he stood alone, and poured forth his burning words, the inspired utterances of an earnest heart; they were words that rang out the death knell of Romish priestcraft; they flew all over the world, to live as messages of freedom through all ages.

Every one must contemplate with admiration this grand historical scene; the black-robed monk, standing face to face with and bearding the throng of princes and nobles in their steel panoply, their gauntleted hands grasping the massive handles of their swords; and the heart must have swelled as the thrilling voice of Luther was heard defying all the powers of earth and evil.

That youthful emperor into whose hands is given vast powers of life and death, freedom and slavery, and whom a mere monk confronts and dares; those grave priests, the venerable archbishop, the excitable southern faces full of restless energy contrasting with the silent features of the German spectators; all this forms a grand and moving scene. At each

to the town hall along byeways, in order to avoid the crowds that had assembled in the principal streets; but in spite of this precaution vast numbers collected at the gates of the town hall and tried to enter with him, though the guards kept them back. Many persons had also got upon the roofs of houses, so anxious were they to see the brave monk.

As he proceeded up the hall several noblemen spoke cheering words to him. "Be bold," said they, "and fear not those who can kill the body but are powerless against the soul."

And the famous General Friendsberg put his hand on Luther's shoulder and said: "Take heed what thou doest, monk; thou art adventuring on a more perilous path than any of us have ever trod. But if thou art in the right, God will not abandon thee."

When before the illustrious assembly he was again asked to retract, but the same brave answer was given, that if they could prove he had spoken evil or said aught against the Scriptures, he would not only retract but would with his own hands throw his books into the fire.

And now in firm language he told the grand

assembly how he had been led to oppose the evils that had sprung up in the church, and how he was ready to answer for his conduct with his life. For two hours he stood alone, and poured forth his burning words, the inspired utterances of an earnest heart; they were words that rang out the death knell of Romish priestcraft; they flew all over the world, to live as messages of freedom through all ages.

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word that falls from the monk's lips the heart quails, for there is an emperor listening to all that is said, who by a mere sign of the finger could crush the fearless speaker; but he blanches not: with the hot perspiration pouring down his face he delivers his glowing message, and when he had uttered his reasons of faith he said: "Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me, Amen." And bowing his head he withdrew from the assembly.

It was nearly dark when the diet broke up, and as Luther came out from the hall escorted by the imperial officers a panic spread through the crowd collected in the streets, and from every lip was heard the cry "They are taking him to prison." "They are leading me to my hotel," returned the calm voice of the hero, and the tumult subsided.

A few days after, when the celebrated diet of Worms had come to an end, Luther received an order to depart to his home at Wittenberg, and then an imperial edict was sent forth by the emperor, condemning him and his works, and threatening severe penalties against those who should sell his books; but the Germans were so indignant with Rome,

that the day after the edict was issued the booksellers ran about the town, selling his books from door to door, and it is said that they even called and offered them for sale at the imperial palace itself.

The edict issued against him would not injure him if he kept within the dominions of the Elector of Saxony, at Wittemberg, but his friends feared treachery, and the elector sent out a friendly party of armed men with masks on their faces, who lay in wait for him as he was returning from a visit to his relatives. They seized him in a lonely place and hastily conducted him to the castle of the Wartburg, where he was confined safe from the snares of his enemies.

This quiet monotonous life and the hard mental labour combined brought on at times heavy fits of despondency and bodily illness, so that he thought himself subject to diabolic visitations ; he tells how the devil appeared to him and tempted him with all his might ; and upon one occasion he was so hardly pressed by the enemy, that in a fit of desperation he threw a large heavy inkstand at the devil's head, but missing him it struck the opposite wall, and to

this day are shown the black stains of the ink on that wall.

But Luther heard of the doings of the outside world, and how his brethren were persecuted and imprisoned, and, far worse, of others who were turning liberty into licence and running away with their dearly bought freedom; and he determined at all hazards to quit his friendly prison and go once more down into the great busy world, and take his share in the busy scenes that loudly demanded his presence.

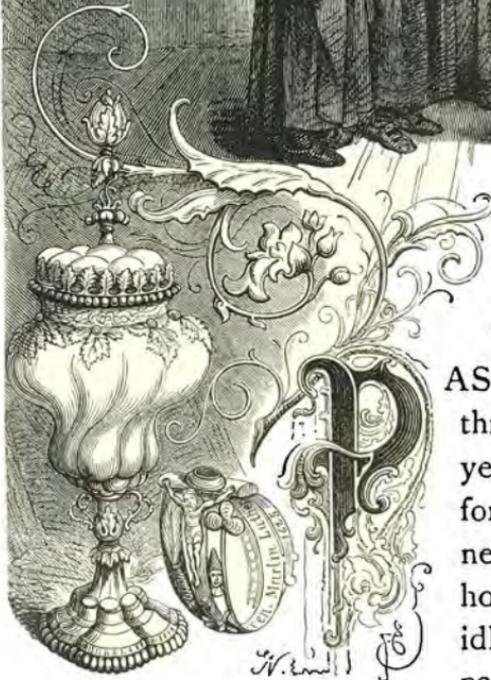




LUTHER AND KATHARINE
VON BORA.

CHAPTER VII.

PASSING swiftly along through the next few years we find the Reformer ever at his post, never flinching in the hour of danger, and never idle when danger had passed away. During



his stay in the Wartburg many of his followers, lacking his guiding hand, had gone beyond the limits of prudence, and the prospects of peace were not bright. Germany soon became involved in all the horrors of a civil war; beginning in the Black Forest it swept through the land from Swabia to the Rhenish provinces. The cause of the war was that the peasants refused any longer to be ground beneath the iron severities of their despotic masters; but, after some successes and many excesses, they were defeated at Beblingen near Wurtzburg, and finally were completely routed at Königshofen, this ending the Peasants' War.

Then came dissensions among Luther's followers and friends, which grieved and perplexed him more than all the attacks of his Romish foes; but yet he laboured steadily; and as time passed on, he, undismayed, built up the cause of the Reformation and it grew and prospered mightily.

But it is not only as the great instrument of Divine providence that we have to view him; we may with profit look into his home life and contemplate him as the firm friend, the affectionate husband, and the gentle father.

In the year 1523, on account of the rapid changes produced by Luther's works, great numbers of monks and nuns became convinced that a monastic life was not in accordance with the teachings of the Bible, and they therefore threw off the vows which enslaved them. It was in April of the same year that a party of nine nuns succeeded in making their escape from the convent of Nimpschen, and being rejected by their families they proceeded to Luther at Wittemberg, who gave them the assistance they required in procuring suitable employment.

One of these nuns, Katharine von Bora, remained in Wittemberg two years, and at the end of that time Luther solemnly espoused her in the presence of two friends, and a little later on, in June 1525, he was quietly married to her in the house of one of the Schönberg Cotta family, when the two Counts von Schlick officiated as best men.

A few days afterwards the wedding feast was held on the home-bringing of the bride to the Augustinian cloister, where Luther dwelt. Brave old John Luther, the father of Martin, and his wife came to the festival from Mans-

feld, and the joyful company made it a day of heartfelt thanksgiving and joy.

Luther's home was like the sacred hearth of Wittemberg, and indeed of all the land; for men came from all parts and found a ready welcome and a haven of rest.

But his benevolent disposition required a



prudent hand to restrain him from giving away too liberally of his small means. Many of the students who came to Wittemberg were so poor that it was with the greatest difficulty they could maintain their position, and to these Luther was father, benefactor, and instructor, procuring money to buy them books, giving

them food to eat, and instruction free, refusing the usual fees which as a tutor he could rightfully accept.

There were some who considered that his wife was too economical, but it is difficult to say what would have become of his family, had she been as recklessly generous as himself ; he seemed not to have the least regard or thought of the morrow's requirements, his faith being of such a robust description that he relied solely upon the goodness of the Creator. He would tell his friends to observe the flowers of the field, and the bird clutching its little twig in confident rest, and never giving heed to anxiety for future food. He is known to have given away his plate to some needy student during the illness of his wife.

He was also the guide and friend of the monks, who gave up the security of the convent to enter into the great battle of life. These coming, as they did, into the world to take a share in its cares and duties, were totally unprovided with the means of living, and ignorant of any occupation which might make them useful members of society. Many of them were also deplorably deficient in learning, so that they

were like little orphans needing a mother's love and a father's care.

These he would set to some useful employment, and induce them to learn a trade, telling them they must not expect to live in idleness and ease ; and it was at this time no uncommon thing to find a monk who had thrown off his gown working at some humble trade. Luther was a great enemy of idleness, nor did he scorn to work at manual labour himself, which served as a healthy example to others, and he was of material use to his household, which was urgently needed, for though he was the leader of the Reformation, and had many opportunities from his position to acquire great wealth, he totally neglected and indeed scorned it.

The number of his books alone would have made him very wealthy. In 1520 he wrote and published one hundred and thirty-three pamphlets and works ; in 1522 one hundred and thirty ; in 1523 one hundred and eighty-three, and so on. These numbers met with unprecedented sales ; so great was the demand that they could not be supplied quickly enough. But no benefit accrued to their author ; he

wished the people to be instructed, and he refused to receive the least tribute from them.

But the manifold duties and hard labours of Luther in Wittemberg did not prevent him from taking his share in the great events that were moving the world. He was the guiding spirit that kept all things in order.

There were diets and councils being held at various places, to settle and define the privileges of both parties. At Spires one was held in 1526, and again at the same place a second was convened in 1529, when the title of "Protestant" was first used to designate those who revolted from the tyranny of Rome.

But it was at Augsburg in 1530 that a diet was assembled, scarcely less important than that held at Worms in 1521. It was called by the Emperor Charles V., who determined to try and end the disputes of the two sides, and endeavour to effect a reconciliation. Luther, over whom there still hung the imperial edict pronounced against him at Worms, did not enter Augsburg, for that would have been to deliberately fling himself into the grasp of his vengeful opponents; but his place was supplied by the learned and pacific Melancthon, guided

by Luther, who was left at Coburg near to Augsburg.

At this diet the protestants were commanded by the emperor to send in their articles of faith, and Melancthon then submitted the celebrated "Confession of Augsburg," which had been drawn up by Luther and himself. This confession of faith plainly showed that the protestant faith and practice were widely different from those of the papists, and though many attempts were made to effect a reconciliation it was found impossible. The papists demanded a full submission and a return to the bosom of their church, but these were promptly refused, and it soon became evident to Luther that unity was out of the question.

When it was seen that nothing would result from the conference, the protestants were suspicious that the emperor, influenced by the papists, would attempt to overturn them by force of arms, and they formed a league amongst themselves for mutual protection in case of invasion of their different territories; this was called the Schmalcald League, and then the emperor saw that the cause of the Reformation had grown to such proportions that he could

not successfully crush it ; he therefore attempted to effect a peace between the parties, and so far succeeded that a treaty was made at Nuremberg in 1530, and afterwards ratified at Ratisbon.

These were the principal events that marked the rise of the Reformation ; in all of which Luther was the great central figure. From his humble home in Wittemberg he guided and supported the fast growing cause ; watching it when danger threatened ; fighting for it when persecution sought to quench it ; and praying for it always.





CHAPTER VIII.

IF the public life of Luther was grand, his private life was equally noble, for there he was most gentle and considerate to those around him. The earnestness which characterized his great achievements was no less marked in his peaceful home, where everything was done with a will and for a purpose.

He had written with a piece of chalk upon the wall behind his stove : " He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much ; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.'

His home was said to be the happiest in Wittenberg; as his children grew up, he was most careful to foster the growth of religious life in their hearts: he had not become too much engrossed in the mighty events of the Reformation to forget the dues and demands of his children; he could write and issue stirring works which shook the powers of the world, and



LUTHER AND HIS FAMILY.

turning from such gigantic work, bend down and remember the wants of the little ones, whose tender affections became entwined around his own great loving heart. With the most tender care he would gather his family around him and pour into their eager hearts the sweet music of Divine love; from every object in nature and every incident of life he would

draw bright illustrations of God's undying providence; every story in the Bible became endued with living beauty and fresh interest when related in his own clear and limpid style.

With loving simplicity he would answer the questions of his children, whose curiosity was fully aroused regarding the mysteries of heaven and earth; more than the others was this the case with his little daughter Magdalen, who, like a flower drinking in the dew, would nestle close, and eagerly looking up into his face gather into her pure little heart the beams of light which his large mind threw forth.

This little child was never weary of learning, and her interest became so absorbed in the Bible and the catechism, that she always began the day with reading a portion of each, and would not sit down to the table before she had committed a small portion to memory.

Luther was mostly surrounded by his children and friends when he had finished the work of the day in his study, and so happy were these little social gatherings that a place at Luther's table was considered an envied distinction, but as the space was limited he was sometimes compelled to refuse additional guests.

These meetings were distinguished by conversation of the most exalted kind and music of the best description. "Music," he would say, "is one of the chief safeguards against the snares of the devil," and he did his utmost to encourage a love for that art in his own household and among his friends.

He had once entertained at his house a Hungarian, named Mathias von Vai, and when this man returned to his own country he felt himself compelled to preach the gospel to his countrymen, but he was soon denounced to the Governor of Pesth as a dangerous innovator, and one whose conduct deserved the severest punishment.

The governor then took two barrels of gunpowder, and, placing them in the market place, ordered the papist who had impeached Mathias to stand upon one barrel and Mathias to mount the other, when he himself would fire the train and see which remained after the explosion. The papist refused the test, but Mathias at once took his stand on one of the barrels, and the papist and his people were condemned to pay a heavy fine to the state, while Mathias was allowed to preach the gospel.

This was one of many instances where the people who had been enlightened by Luther's agency stood faithful to their profession, but although Luther's life was spent in fiercely battling for freedom he was himself always trying to promote peace and happiness in the lives of those with whom he came in contact, as the following characteristic stories will show.

It happened once that his secretary John, who lived with him, had conceived a passion for the daughter of a neighbour, who forbade the union on account of the youth and poverty of each; but the two young people secretly betrothed themselves and resolved to wait faithfully for a suitable opportunity to be married.

But the secret was discovered to Luther by the young man himself, whereupon his master sent for the maiden, and in his gentle manner he pointed out to her how sinful it was to practise deception, and how such conduct always brought its own punishment; he blamed her not for her affection, but that in opposition to the will of her parents she had pledged herself to marry the young man.

He told her that the claims of duty were not to

to be lightly laid aside ; but finding that he could not shake her resolution to wait until better times came, he determined to end the matter at once, and sending for the parents, he agreed, if they would give their consent, to provide the necessary means from his own slender resources. This was agreed upon, and shortly afterwards



the marriage took place, Luther by his generosity and tact preventing further ill consequences and making all concerned in the matter quite happy.

When he had discharged this duty, he received a visit from a poor student who came to ask for assistance to reach his native place,

but this was more than difficult, for the great Reformer had no money; at last seizing a large silver goblet that stood on a table, a present from the elector, he went with the student to a goldsmith and requested him to melt it down and give him the money which it was worth.

But the goldsmith refused to deprive him of such a valuable gift, whereupon Luther, catching it up, squeezed it out of all shape and said, "There, it is no longer a goblet, but only a lump of silver, now let me have its worth," which the goldsmith, seeing his determination, quickly did, and the poor student went on his way rejoicing.

Whatever charges the enemies of Luther brought against him of heresy, they could find no occasion to accuse him of professing what he did not himself practise, in private as in public. Erasmus said of him: "the private life and conduct of this man are to be commended. It is a great testimony in his favour that even his enemies cannot find subject matter for calumniating him."

And Melancthon, who enjoyed the closest intimacy with him, says: "I have often surprised him by himself in the act of prayer, hot

tears coursing down his cheeks whilst earnestly entreating God for the welfare of His church."

It may be said of him with truth "whatsoever his hand found to do he did it with his whole might." This was the great secret of his success, his whole life was marked by strong earnestness of purpose in every phase, and while this was his ruling characteristic his life was a glorious pageant of conquest over error and superstition.





CHAPTER IX.

TOWARDS the close of his life Luther conceived a dislike for Wittemberg as a place of residence, although it was hallowed with the brave remembrances of the past and made sacred because it held all that remained of his darling child, Magdalen, whom he had dearly loved ; she had nestled into the very warmest corner of his large heart, and his grief was heavy when she quietly sank to rest. With what relief he had turned from popes and priests to listen to the artless prattle of the little one, and how careful he had been to instil into her heart the purest teachings of the Bible, and she had loved to be taken up into his arms and tell him all her little troubles, how the birds which she loved so well were in constant danger from the snares of cruel heedless boys, and how she

would impress upon him the urgency of their need of protection.

During the last few hours of her life he said to her : " My darling little daughter, my darling Magdalen, thou wouldst doubtless willingly remain with thy father, but thou wouldst also go hence willingly to thy other Father if He call thee ? "



LUTHER AND HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER MAGDALEN.

" Yes, my dear father, as God shall please. "

He then walked up and down the room for some time, saying, " Ah, I have loved her dearly ! if her flesh be so strong, what must her spirit be ? "

And shortly afterwards she fell into that sleep which knows no waking, and as the many

friends of the father came to sympathise with him, he said: "Friends, be not grieved. I have sent a saint to heaven; could such a death be mine, I would joyfully die this moment."

Luther had gained the firm respect and love of the students in the university, and this made many bright hours for him; he was every day receiving fresh instances of their admiration; he was their hero, and they once took an opportunity of testifying their gratitude which left no doubt of their feelings.

At one of their banquets one night they suddenly broke up, and taking torches they paraded the gardens of the university singing the psalms which he loved; they next met with him, and surrounding him they gave him most affectionate salutations, and forming a procession they marched with him at their head through the town, singing Melancthon's hymn "Therefore we may rejoice," and then escorting their hero home, they left him with their hearty congratulations ringing in his ears.

It was ordained that the life of Luther was to be one of great storms and brilliant sunshine, of heavy labour and fierce excitement. His last days were spent in the difficult and

delicate task of reconciling the counts of Mansfeld.

These nobles had quarrelled respecting certain rights in the mines belonging to them, and they agreed to call in Luther as arbitrator.



TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION OF STUDENTS IN HONOUR OF LUTHER.

Although he had been a martyr to bodily illness for the last few years, and at this time he was suffering great agonies, he joyfully consented to go and arrange the points in dispute. He took with him his three sons and

a friend, and started on his mission of peace, and on January 28th he entered Eisleben, his birthplace.

With his customary earnestness he quickly commenced the work for which he had come, but he found it a very difficult task; he told the disputants they must exercise mutual forbearance. "If," said he, "you desire to bring a tree into the house, you do not force the branches in first, for they would then spread out and prevent its ingress. You introduce it by the stem, and the branches will bend and yield in following it."

On February 7th, in one of his letters to his wife, he said: "Dear Katharine, the Almighty has manifested the power of His grace in this affair. The lords have come to an agreement upon all the points in dispute except two or three, and, among other great ends achieved, the counts Gebhard and Albert are reconciled."

But the end was at hand, although they did not deem it so near. He had been exceedingly active during the time he was at Eisleben, and had actually taken part in the conference with the counts up to the day before his death, but

towards the evening he became so ill that he retired to his room in great agony, accompanied by two of his sons and Master Cœlius, and soon afterwards Goldschmidt entered the room and they remained with him during all that anxious night. They tried every resource to relieve him, but it seemed to be in vain; the hours slowly dragged past, each one bringing the end nearer and bearing away the constant prayer, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." When the morning broke it found the watchers eagerly looking for any sign of improvement, but Luther said, "Friends, I am dying, I shall remain with you here at Eisleben"; and raising his eyes to heaven he uttered: "O my Father, Thou the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, Thou the source of all consolation, I thank Thee for having revealed unto me Thy well beloved Son in whom I believe, whom I have preached and acknowledged and made known, whom I have loved and celebrated, and whom the pope and the impious persecute; I commend my soul to Thee, O my Lord Jesus Christ."

He next repeated three times, "Into Thy

hands I commend my spirit, Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth."

Then his eyes closed and he fell back in a swoon, and the watchers made every effort to restore him to life; at length he again revived, and when asked by Doctor Jonas, "Reverend father, do you die in the faith which you have taught?" the dying hero opened his eyes, looked fixedly at Doctor Jonas, and firmly and distinctly answered "Yes," and falling into a slumber his friends noticed him growing paler and paler and his breathing fainter; and soon afterwards, with one deep sigh, the brave spirit fled away, and the sorrowing watchers looked only upon the dead body of the great Reformer.

Two days afterwards the roads leading into Wittemberg were lined with silent and sorrowful spectators, come to meet the remains of their champion and friend; and the sad procession slowly wended its way along the road, amid the deep grief of the people, into the town.

On February 22nd the funeral took place. The procession was arranged in the following order:

Four deacons of the Church; Doctor Pomer; the officers of the elector on horseback; the two Counts of Mansfeld with their principal attendants. Then came the body in a leaden coffin covered with black velvet, on a car; Luther's widow in an open chariot with some female friends; his three sons; his brother James; and his wife's two sisters. Then, two and two, George and Syriacus, the merchants; the chevalier Magnificus and Philip Melancthon; Justus Jonas, Gaspard Cruciger, Jerome Schurf, and other professors, doctors, councillors, students, men, women and children of every age and rank, all dissolved in tears.

When the procession reached the church, the body was deposited on a bier in front of the altar, and Doctor Pomer delivered a funeral discourse, broken by sobs and agonized weeping; then the bosom friend of the dead hero, Melancthon, spoke the utterance of his broken heart for the loss which could not be retrieved.

The service ended, the body was placed in its final earthly abode in a vault in front of the pulpit. The grave was filled up and properly secured, and a brass plate was affixed to it with this inscription :

MARTINI LUTHERI S. THEOLOGIÆ
DOCTORIS CORPUS H.L.S.E. QUI
ANNO CHRISTI MDLVI. XII. CAL. MARTII
EVSLEBII IN PATRIÂ, S.M.O.C.V.
ANN. LXIII. M.II.D.X.

And there to this day may be seen the tomb of him who lived long enough to see his work too firmly established to be thrown down. Yet some would have wreaked their impotent vengeance even upon the lifeless body, for some years afterwards, when Wittemberg was besieged and taken, the Emperor Charles V. went to see the tomb, and as he was reading the inscription one of his officers proposed to open the grave and scatter the ashes of the heretic to the winds.

The monarch's cheeks grew red as he angrily replied: "I war not with the dead, let this place be respected."

And in peace the ashes rest; but Luther, that manifestation of God's word, has left his inspired deeds upon the mighty scroll of time, from which neither emperors, kings, nor popes can erase them. As we look down upon the stones covering that body our hearts prompt us to say:

HE WAS A HERO INDEED.